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NEW STATESMAN

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DEFENCE: William Rodgers states his case

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...America's Big Ear in the heart of Yorkshire

The Rooker Affair: fact & fiction

Germany & the Middle East

The secret campaign against the ILEA

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol 100 18 July 1980 No 2574

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NOTES

Who killed Walter Rodney?

H. O. Nazareth writes: The murder of Walter Rodney, a leading member of the newly-formed Working People's Alliance, has come as such a shock in Guyana, that even Army personnel have volunteered information on Gregory Smith, named by Donald Rodney as the man who gave him the 'walkie-talkie' which exploded, killing his brother.

Smith, as a corporal in the Guyana Defence Force, Maritime Division, was trained at London's British Military School (Electronics). On his return to Guyana, he 'left' the GDF in 1978, on the grounds that he was dissatisfied with his pay. Later that year, he rejoined, but no disciplinary action was taken against him and he was promoted to acting sergeant.

Late in 1979, he 'left' the GDF again and put it about that he had been victimised by the regime of Prime Minister Forbes Burnham, thus attracting WPA support, but no court martial. He then offered to make walkie-talkie sets for WPA use. According to an Army source, he received his full salary during both 'defections', right up to the time of Rodney's murder, and paid regular visits to Marine Command. On at least two occasions after his second 'defection' he had discussions with Norman McClean, Guyanese Chief of Staff.

Events following the explosion suggest that he was not acting on his personal initiative. Government radio reports 10 hours after the explosion said that the bomb had gone off outside Georgetown prison, where, according to Donald Rodney's statement, Smith had specified the 'walkie-talkie' be tested. The explosion actually occurred some distance away, in Hatfield Street, where the Rodneys' car was parked after travelling past the prison. The radio reports also said that the victim's face had blown up beyond recognition. This would have been the case had Rodney been holding the parcel strictly in accordance with Smith's instructions, instead of resting it in his lap.

The PNC regime continue to claim that Rodney was carrying a home-made bomb to blow up the prison. But a senior Guyanese official has leaked information that the bomb was a sophisticated anti-personnel bomb, flown in from abroad. Smith could not have made such a complex bomb: 'it was the type used by the CIA'.

Eye witnesses also say that Army transport, and vans containing PNC 'Death Squad' men, were parked near the place where the explosion was expected, and they cordoned off the entire area minutes after the bomb went off. The same night, Smith was flown by GDF helicopter to Kwakwami, in the Guyanese interior. It is believed that he is now in Surinam.

Burnham announced that two British experts, Dr Frank Skuse, forensic scientist, and Dr Hugh Johnson, forensic pathologist at St Thomas Hospital, were making an investigation. The WPA are campaigning for their report to be made public.

Rodney's funeral was fixed for 21 June, but the regime delayed handing over the body until the following day. It was in an advanced stage of decomposition 'because the refrigeration system of Georgetown's public mortuary was under repairs'.

BBC responds to NS

Chris Mullin writes: Following a report in last week's NS the Director General of the BBC, Ian Trethowan, has at last replied to the letter sent in February by five Labour MPs strongly criticising a three-hour BBC-2 documentary on the Thai Royal family.

In a letter dated 11 July — the day after the NS became available in London — Mr Trethowan apologises for what he describes as the 'inexcusable' delay. He goes on: 'There is no doubt that this two-part programme presented a one-sided and uncritical view of the country and the way it is governed'. He justifies this, however, on the extraordinary grounds that the film contained 'a large number of beautiful pictures many of which would have been lost if the two parts had been cut down' (Nobody suggested such cuts). Mr Trethowan continues: 'This consideration on the whole outweighed the political considerations which are not the only stand-point from which to judge the programme'.

The Director General avoids telling the MPs that the BBC Current Affairs Department actually withdrew from the making of the programme after repeated rows about its content. Neither does he attempt to explain why, in the course of three hours, it did not prove possible to interview a single person opposed to the existing order in Thailand. Instead he repeats the traditional self-satisfied BBC response to critics:

> While you and your colleagues and some other viewers took exception to the rather glowing account it presented of the way in which the country is run, we also have received some remarkably glowing tributes to the programme from people whose interests and possibly political beliefs covers a wide range.

Finally, he says:

> Despite our reservations about the programme nobody here regarded it as being what you describe as 'a snow job' on the Thai government and it is not the sort of programme from which we would expect to make an appreciable profit.

This much at least is true. Although the film was financed by the BBC to the tune of £100,000 the only firm sale so far has been to a West German TV station.

British Rail: not much of an asset strip

Mick Hamer writes: The government has performed a major U-turn over its plan to hive off parts of British Rail. The scheme announced this week is a significant victory for Sir Peter Parker in his battle to minimize the damage done to BR by the government's privatisation plans. Original government proposals envisaged that the government would have the majority stake in any new company set up to own BR's non-rail subsidiaries. As recently as May junior transport minister Kenneth Clarke said that the government were 'particularly interested' in establishing a holding company in which the BR Board 'could retain a significant stake'. To be significant, he explained: 'one does not have to hold 51 per cent of the equity or anything like it.'

The proposals announced this week give BR 100 per cent of the shares in a new holding company which will own the assets of four British Rail sub-

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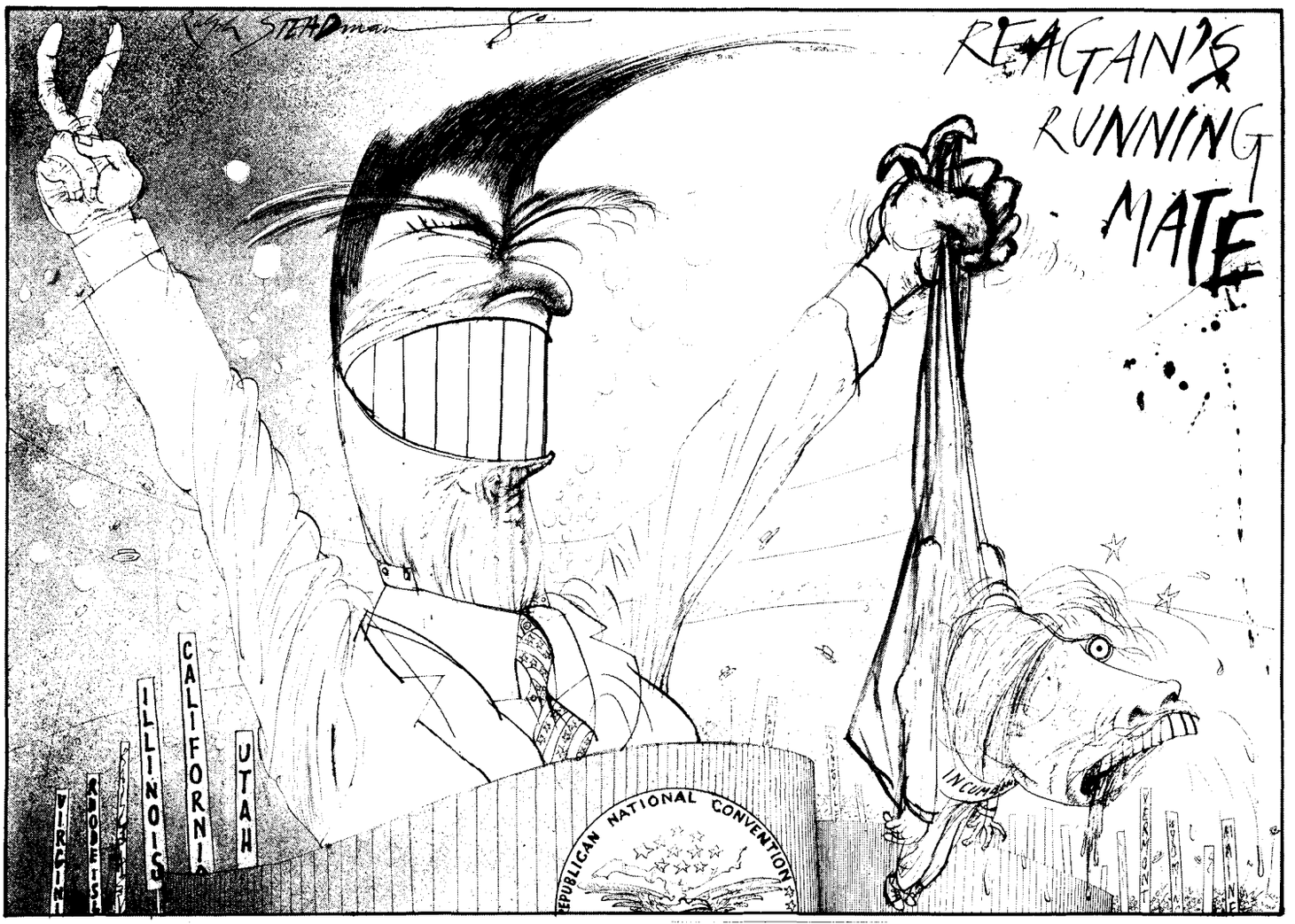

sidiaries: Sealink, British Transport Hotels, British Rail Hovercraft and British Rail Property Holdings. Together these companies made profits of just under £40 million last year. Although a lot depends on the details of the legislation, at the moment it seems as though BR will have considerable freedom to decide the nature of any private sector involvement in this new company and the minister promises that they will be able to keep any cash raised from the private sector. It is likely that BR will sell off some shares, particularly in Sealink — profits last year of £9.7 million — but trading links between the railways and its subsidiaries will be protected by commercial contracts. It is also possible that there will be specific asset sales — such as that of the Gleneagles Hotel and some properties — but these are essentially short-term sales caused by the acute financial squeeze which the government is imposing on British Rail and its businesses.

The scheme has two obvious potential disadvantages in the long term. First, insofar as BR have to rely on new equity capital for the holding company, the cost of capital will rise as they lose some of the benefits of profits growth. For example, one of the reasons why massive profits at British Gas entirely acrue to the Corporation and (very indirectly) the taxpayer, is because it has been financed in the past by fixed interest loan capital. There are two mitigating factors: the property company especially looks as though it has plenty of scope to raise loan capital under the new scheme. Second, the growth of the hotel business has been hindered in the past by government policy, which effectively prevented BR building any new hotels: BR now has more freedom to expand this business and the increased profits could make up for any dilution caused by issuing shares to outsiders.

The second problem is more serious. Bringing in outside shareholders is likely to reduce the cash flow BR receives from these companies. BR hopes that growth in the business will make up the difference, but there will be a very large gap to make up and therefore this seems unlikely.

Fretilin's second wind

Christopher Hitchens writes from Luanda: Fretilin, the movement for the independence of East Timor, has resumed military operations against the occupying forces of Indonesia. When I interviewed Fretilin foreign minister Mari Alkatiri here recently he explained the developments which culminated, according to reports confirmed by the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, with guerrilla attacks within the Timorese capital Dili itself.

Last year was a bad one for Fretilin. With 200,000 people (20 per cent of its population) already dead from military action, starvation or disease, the movement suffered the loss in combat of its President, Nicolau Lobatu. After this reverse, says Alkatiri, Fretilin had no option but to recommend a policy of surrender to the civilian population, and to hope that by preserving the 'water' they would also preserve the 'fish'.

The tactic seems to have paid off. Fretilin were very heartened to hear, in March of this year, that the Catholic bishop of Dili had confirmed a revival of guerrilla activity, and given it as his opinion that the movement was still dispersed and surviving across the entire territory. His statement was made to a West German television reporter under the noses of the Indonesian police, so it seems that the bishop, Martino da Costa Lopez, must have been serious in what he said.

The near-genocide of its people, and the tight security clamp imposed by the occupying forces, means that Fretilin leaders experience unusual difficulties in maintaining contact with their base. But from independently substantiated sources and from refugees arriving in Australia and elsewhere it is still possible for them to keep in touch. Their chief hope is that the continuing military losses and the continued international odium will force a split in the Indonesian establishment. There are some indications already that the Indonesian foreign ministry is unhappy with the way in which the Defence Ministry runs East Timor as a fiefdom, and fails to impose the Indonesian hegemony of language and military discipline on the stubborn population.

Diplomatic recognition is one of Fretilin's strongest cards. Indonesia wants to become chairman of the non-aligned movement before long, and wants to avoid repeated condemnation in international forums. Fretilin's 'front line states' in the battle for recognition are principally its former brothers under the Portuguese empire, Angola and Mozambique. It also has a strong and sympathetic lobby in Portugal itself. Many Third World countries have extended recognition and accepted the principle of self-determination for East Timor. Conspicuous by their absence so far have been the countries of the Warsaw Pact, which, some believe, regard Indonesia as a possible bulwark and ally against China.

UK won't ratify UN Convention on women

Eveline Hunter writes from Copenhagen: The UK government will not be signing the UN Convention on the elimination of discriminatin against women. Baroness Young, leader of the UK delegation to the UN conference on women and Minister of State for Education, said: 'The British government takes its responsibilities under international conventions very seriously. We do not sign them until we know that we can subsequently ratify them.'

The UN conference opened this week in Copenhagen to examine the progress made by women in the first five years of the Decade for Women and to develop a programme of action for the next five. The 30-article Convention to eliminate discrimination was drawn up by the UN last year and is to be signed by delegated countries at the end of the conference. It calls on governments to introduce equality legislation, to end discrimination in their own nationality and immigration laws, marriage law and tax and welfare benefits and to promote equality within education and political life. It also proposes the setting up of a committee to

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investigate how the Convention is subsequently implemented.

Baroness Young made no mention in her official speech of the UK's own nationality rules which discriminate directly against women and would contravene the UN Convention. This is probably the main reason for the Government's refusal to sign. She did express concern, however, at the increase in female (compared to male) unemployment and at the effect of new technology on women's jobs.

The official UK report to the conference on progress in the past five years is a ten-page document describing a number of education and training projects for women in Britain, mainly in engineering and including the government's TOPS scheme. No mention was made of wages, childcare facilities, abortion, contraception or family law.

This was not unusual. Few of the delegations have given critical reports of their own countries' records, with a few exceptions such as Denmark itself. There is, however, a parallel conference in Copenhagen of non-government organisations, at which a number of interesting debates have shown up similarities and inadequacies in each country. The UN itself has also produced extensive background reports on women's gains — and losses — throughout the world.

A number of political problems between delegates have predictably arisen. The presence of Leila Khaled of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and the inclusion of the Palestinian refugees problem as a main item on the agenda has led to clashes with the Israeli delegation, who have accused the UN organisers of bias against them. Likewise, a demonstration of Chilean women suggests there may be problems when the Chileans give their official report. The conference continues until 30 July.

'One in seven Welsh homes unfit'

Jim Caldwell writes from Cardiff: The industrial devastation of South Wales is matched by a housing crisis of huge proportions according to a report published this week by Shelter. In two valley districts four out of every ten homes are unfit. The 'slim down' of the steel works at Port Talbot and Llanwern, with its knock on effect on the coal field, is expected to push unemployment in the valleys of Mid-Glamorgan up to 16 per cent by the end of the year. An analysis of housing investment programmes (HIPS) submitted to the Welsh Office by 33 of the 37 district councils in Wales shows that 83,000 houses are unfit and a further 75,000 lack basic amenities; 40 per cent of the unfit homes are concentrated in four South Wales valley districts.

The figures, which have been withheld from MPs, are published by Shelter's magazine *Roof* in an article by two researchers from University College Cardiff. Peter McCormack and John Lambert of the Social Administration Department asked for copies of the HIPS which they say 'seem designed to conceal the enormity of housing problems in Wales'. Though the information contained in them is 'a mixture of good and bad data, 'hunch and guestimate', McCormack and Lambert say they reveal problems to rank with the worst in Britain.

In the Rhondda Valley, 40 per cent of the total housing stock — private and municipal — is unfit. In the neighbouring Cynon valley the figure is 39 per cent, in Merthyr Tydfil 20 per cent and in the Rhymney valley 16 per cent. Taking unfit properties and those lacking basic amenities together, the HIPS give a figure of 15.4 per cent substandard housing in Wales compared with 9.6 per cent in England.

The prospects, with rising unemployment and falling government support, are not good. McCormack and Lambert estimate 140,000 homes in Wales could be improved, but between 1974 and 1978 the improvement rate was only 7,000 a year. For the next five years local authorities have applied for improvement grants covering only 34,000 properties. 'That may be political realism but it makes a nonsense of bids as a reflection of need', the authors say.

They are highly critical of the standard of information requested by the Welsh Office. The form to be filled in by councils is much briefer than that in England and many authorities relied on outdated surveys: 'The inadequacy of the information in the Welsh HIPS reveals a disturbing lack of concern on the part of both the Welsh Office and the local authorities for obtaining satisfactory data.'

The Welsh Office has replied that councils are free to decide how to spend their block allocation — whether on repairs and improvement or new building. The new Housing Bill will allow renovation grants to be directed where they are most needed, a spokesman said. In fact most district councils have almost stopped building and huge backlogs of council house repairs have built up. Predictably the councils have blamed government cuts for the problem. But McCormack and Lambert have a warning for them: 'Given the discrepancies between what the authorities bid for and what they actually get, the state of housing in Wales — after a few years of faltering advance towards the level of English provision and condition — must now face another period of decline. Welsh local authorities fudge the issue at their peril. Inadequate assessment of need only perpetuates and intensifies Wales' long history of disadvantage.'

LIBRARIES AND INDEXERS

The *New Statesman* is changing its page numbering system. Each issue will now start from page 1 and will be indexed by issue *and* page number. Eg, this page will be indexed as 2574/4. We apologise to readers for not including this change at the beginning of a new volume last week.

Patrick Wintour

Much ado about nothing

EIGHTY YEARS AGO the Labour Representation Committee, at its first conference, defined its purpose as 'to devise ways and means for securing the return of an increased number of Labour members to the next parliament.' A similar aim was the underlying purpose of the Committee of Enquiry which reported this week and which was, indeed, the third attempt at reform of the party since the fifties. But it is hard to believe that it is a forerunner of anything like the success which followed the founding of the Labour Representation Committee. In its few pages the report manages to cram in an astounding number of unremarkable and vague recommendations. For example: there should be more political education in the trades unions; there 'should be better coverage of industrial relations in the media'; the party 'should seriously consider a closer relationship with youth organisations promoting a co-operative and broadly socialist spirit' (the commission then recommends two organisations to send the pulse racing: Young Christian Workers and Woodcraft Folk.)

Even when the Commission believes it is being precise about an important issue, such as the role of extra-parliamentary politics, their report is hopelessly wooly:

> The Commission believes specifically there is a need for more activity at local level promoted by constituency parties and greater co-operation between Labour Groups and the District or County Party.

As is often the case, the report is more interesting for what it has left out than for what it has included. There is no mention of the Parliamentary Labour Party (the subject of a separate enquiry by the PLP itself). There is no mention of the composition of the NEC or the effectiveness of their sub-committees and no mention of union bloc votes at conference or methods of union delegation voting. As one commission member put it: 'It was a case of we won't talk about you if you don't talk about us.'

On the central issue of party finance — the problem which originally caused David Basnett's GMWU to call for the enquiry — the deep seated problems have not been solved. A great deal of faith is being placed in the appointment of a new director of finance and also in finding someone of good enough calibre to take up this post from within the trade unions. But, whilst rightly calling for accounts which the average party member can understand, the report never explains how increasing from 1982 the union affilitation fee to 50p per member and the individual membership to £5 will solve the party's chronic financial deficit. There is no financial analysis of future expenditure or even a rough estimate of the cost of many of the report's recommendations such as hiring another 18 regional agents.

On the basis of the evidence to the inquiry from the Fabians and the GMWU — the fullest financial evidence submitted — a deficit of £300,000 in 1982 still seems highly likely even with the increased contribution rates and assuming that there is no improvement in the standard of service provided by the party. But the report recommends many such improvements. Clearly, with all reserves and investment income gone and no more than (an optimistic) £150,000 expected from the lottery, the party needs more members or higher affiliation fees to avoid continuing financial crises. But there is no cast-iron commitment to index-link membership fees.

A slight note of encouragement comes in the still confidential report of the Membership and Organisation panel which shows that individual party membership is higher than thought at 340,000 and that not all the subs are getting to head office. But not even this discovery can save the report from its bland final financial recommendation 'that the NEC considers plans to overcome the financial problems and ensure the long term viability of the party.' It hardly adds up to an over-detailed brief for the new financial director.

THE COMMISSION'S REPORT is based on papers prepared by each of the three panels — finance, membership and organisation and political education. The M&O's 75 page report repeatedly complains about the very tight timetable for their work. Indeed, 2,000 pieces of evidence were received and much of it did not arrive until just before the 1 June deadline, by which time the panel had written large sections of its report.

A series of the M&O's recommendations have been dropped in the final report. The committe urged that 'the payment of General Committee delegates . . . be firmly discouraged' — this is a reference to the practice of paying delegates to attend a union branch meeting, from which they move directly on to the Labour Party GMC meeting. Also excluded were proposals to *base* 18 area organisers away from the regional office (rather than merely having them *work* away from the offices); a proposal to discourage the sponsoring of candidates who are not members of the sponsoring union and a proposal for a central pool for trades union contributions to agents' salaries.

Although the report does suggest that one constituency delegate is allowed onto the powerful conference arrangements committee, hitherto carved up by the unions, it manages to omit many of the M&O panel's recommendations to make conferences more open. Gone are the ideas that NEC ballot papers should be distributed before conference and that card votes should be recorded, so that union leaders' behaviour can be checked. Specific changes to allow earlier compositing of motions by dropping the ammendment stage — so that CLPs and union branches know which motions will actually be voted on at conference — have been watered down to a promise to consider the pre-conference timetable. In short, attempts to control the power of the unions within the party and to make conference more of a real debate have been largely abandoned.

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POLITICS
Patrick Wintour

The real story behind the Rooker affair

Buy British, or buy best?

SEVERAL WEEKS AFTER Jeff Rooker enlivened a particularly somnulent discussion of the report stage of the Industry Bill with his allegations about corruption in Rolls-Royce's ordering policy, heads are still being scratched as to what the whole row was about. Not least is this happening on the House of Commons Industry Committee some of whose members are keen to investigate aspects of the affair but cannot get all the parties to agree to give evidence.

Rooker, of course, has apologised unequivocally to the Rolls employee, Frank Turner, whom he implied had accepted bribes to favour the Italian machine tool company Morando over the British Webster and Bennett concern. Rooker's decision to apologise was heavily influenced by the decision of the Industry Committee not to investigate this accusation under the cover of parliamentary privilege. But the naming of Turner succeeded in obscuring the essence of the issue which was an anxiety among the executives of Webster and Bennett — to all appearances a successful machine tool company — to have the ordering policy of Rolls-Royce investigated, as it appeared to be working against British companies.

Late in February this year the executive chairman of Webster and Bennett, Mr Alex Sanders, received through the Coventry Chamber of Commerce, a circular from the Industry and Trade Committee announcing an enquiry into the UK's import/export performance and what international practices might be responsible. On 2 April — six weeks before Rooker's speech — Sanders wrote to the clerk to the committee saying he 'had repeatedly tried to highlight gross irregularities in machine tool imports to National Enterprise Board companies with various MPs but have received little support'. The clerk wrote back saying that the committee was happy to receive evidence but it would be for the committee to decide whether or not to publish it and whether or not to invite any supplementary oral evidence. Sanders then wrote in late April to a local MP Geoffrey Robinson asking whether the committee had 'any teeth or whether it was just a talking shop'. He went on: 'we have been on this subject for a few years and we do not want to waste any more time.' Robinson appears to have encouraged Sanders to continue his correspondence with the industry and trade committee even though it is 'wholly committed to free trade'. 'Be on your toes and let's see what happens'. The clerk, for his part showed Sander's letter to the committee to Sir Donald Kaberry, the committee chairman, but to no other committee members and thought no more of it since Sanders did not take Robinson's advice and reply.

Webster and Bennett then tried a different tack. Union members at Websters have for some time been concerned about the collapse of the Coventry machine tool industry. Indeed the union convenor at Webster and Bennett Alec Boyd (who doubles as a manager) is chairman of the Coventry Machine Tool Workers Committee which in September 1978 completed a report on the crisis in the industry in conjunction with Coventry Workshop. Much of the report focused on the problem of international trade and specialisation, the lack of accountability in the ordering policy of state financed firms and the concentration of ownership in the machine tool industry. Rooker was contacted by Webster stewards in mid-April and a date was made for him to visit the factory on 30 May. In fact the factory was closed that week so it seems unlikely that Rooker went just to meet the stewards and the workforce, suggesting that he also specifically went to see Sanders.

After the visit Rooker rang the company to check the spelling of certain names and details of the import agent for Morando, Industrial Sales (Machine Tools) in Winslow Cheshire and then made his speech on 18 June. As one Webster and Bennett employee admitted 'We knew the roof would fall in, but we did not know the sky would come in afterwards'. The intention was to get the select committee to take the matter up in its inquiry. (The Machine Tool Trades Association has extraordinarily refused to help the select committee on its general inquiry into imports, saying they had no useful data to give. This is curious as many association members are import agents). But Kaberry said on 2 July that he would not conduct an inquiry even if all the allegations were to be proved up to the hilt and so Rooker apologised. Kaberry has however since said that he is prepared to investigate. Rolls are willing to provide a 'de-Turnerised' version of their report on the affair — by which they mean a report concentrating on other aspects than the charge against Turner — but further progress depends on Webster and Bennett coming forward. At present this seems unlikely. John Brown Engineering, the parent company, are clearly unhappy that one at Websters has spoken to Rooker and appear to want the matter dropped.

THE CONTROVERSY HAS centred on two orders for 1200 mm capacity vertical boring milling machines which make components for the RB-211, the mainstay of Rolls-Royce. The first order was for a factory in Sunderland; the second in Miami. Webster and Bennett have a close relationship with Rolls and, according to Rolls, have provided 200 of the 300 machine tools currently used by the company. But Rolls say that at the moment, for every pound spent in Britain they spend another pound overseas. Union officials in Rolls believe overseas supplies may be more important saying that Rolls has increased their overseas buying recently. Similarly a great deal of design has also been subcontracted abroad due to lack of skilled engineers in Britain (Rolls have spent £500,000 on advertising for engineers in the past year).

In 1978 Rolls needed machines to cut waspalloy, a particularly vicious and tough metal in order to make a high pressure disc for the hot end of an engine. Webster and Bennett had already supplied such machines for a Rolls plant in Glasgow. And when, as at Rolls Rodney works Websters machinery would be inadequate in some respect, Rolls had told them, giving them the opportunity to improve the specification of their machines. In the case of the machines to cut waspalloy Rolls wanted three machines — one in Sunderland and two in Derby. In June 1978 Webster and Bennett received an official request to tender for two 48" numerically controlled machines equipped with automatic tool changers for Derby. Webster tendered in early June and visited the Derby factory in late June to discuss an improved design for the tool changer. Webster and Bennett's complaint was that though they knew in early 1978 that one machine was needed in Sunderland and indeed tendered they did not realise that the order could be for as many as nine machines, each worth roughly £160,000. If they had known there were further orders behind the first Sunderland order, they would have speeded up their design project to meet the same technical standards as their competitors.

However, by then it was clear to Frank Turner, at that time a manager in Derby, who visited the Sunderland factory in April 1978, that the Morando machine was better. There are several different explanations of why Morando's VLN12 was better than W&B 48" ERNC: Mornados had better speeds, taking material out at a faster rate; at 18 tons it was heavier than Webster's 13.7 tons and unlike some of Websters machines in Derby it did not break in the position where the toolholders are located. It is also clear that at the time opinion was divided within Websters about the significance of the failure to get the Sunderland order for 9 machines. Some Webster executives felt cheated since despite a series of meetings between Sanders, Breeze the Sales Manager and Rolls managers Wood and Turner during April and August 1978 explaining their projected model, the 'S' series, they had not been told of the magnitude of the Sunderland order. They also felt that Rolls managers in Derby had forced a change in the ordering policy of Sunderland.

The initial Sunderland-Derby order for three machines was originally signed with Morando in September 1978 and increased in early-1979 to nine more machines. Rolls say this was necessary to expand the Sunderland factory to deal with an unexpected demand for the RB-211. A German company Dorries also tendered. After the failure to get the Sunderland order and the consternation this caused, Websters continued to try and impress

Soviet Censorship
How repressive is it?

Russian authors describe censorship of literature, religion, science etc. in the latest issue of **Index on Censorship.** Articles include: Samizdat and Rebirth by *Sinyavsky;* Rewriting History by *Nekrich:* Science in Blinkers by *Popovsky;* Theatre Censorship by *Tamarchenko.* Also: Survival of Dissidents, Non-Russian Nationalism, Lithuania's Unofficial Press, Christian Samizdat; Human Rights Movement, a profile of Vladimir Voinovich; and A UNIQUE CATALOGUE OF SOVIET SAMITZDAT PERIODICALS WHICH HAVE APPEARED DURING THE LAST 4 YEARS.

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on Rolls the importance of their newly designed machine the 'S' series. In August 1979 Rolls indeed had given Websters a piece of Waspalloy to work on with their new machine. Unfortunately for Websters a fire in the summer set back their progress and their initial promise to Rolls that they would be back with results to match Morando's in September 1979 failed to materialise. Because of the fire they instead only had two prototypes ready for a machine tool exhibition in Milan in the autumn of 1979. Websters have now promised Rolls that they will return to Rolls with their machine and the cut waspalloy this year.

Internal documents show Webster worried in 1978 that, contrary to normal policy, Rolls did not fully tell them during the year of their future ordering plans, so that they had no chance to tender for the work; a decision which Webster finds even harder to understand as they had successfully supplied Rolls in the past. However, there does not appear to be any real dispute that the Morando machine was a better machine. Rolls, it is true, formed this opinion without asking for tenders but that is not perhaps strictly necessary when they had Morando machines elsewhere in the company and have had since the Sixties.

Once the Sunderland order was lost Webster must have resigned themselves to losing the others: with numerically controlled machine tools, there is a strong argument in favour of uniformity because of the high cost of designing the computer programme. But in March this year Mr Goodall, of Wickman's — one of Webster's sister companies that sells Websters machines overseas, twice telexed from his Chicago base to Webster's Mr Breeze. He said that he had heard that a factory was being built by Rolls in Miami and that he had been in touch with the British trade attaches in Atlanta and Chicago. Since Delta, Pan Am and Eastern Airlines alls use Rolls engines and Webster and Bennett machine tools he hoped that the general manager at the Miami factory would buy from Webster and Bennett. After receiving two telexes from Goodall, Breeze discovered from Rolls that the decision to buy from Morando had been made at least three months before. And, indeed, as it was widely known in the middle of 1979 that Rolls were going to Miami — though details may have been hard to come by for political reasons — Spring this year seems rather late in the day to start worrying about orders. However, to the Webster executives it revived all the old wounds about the lost Sunderland order and the letter was sent to the select committee, that led eventually to the approach to Rooker, the first MP prepared to raise the matter publicly.

EDUCATION
Rick Rogers

Plans to abolish the ILEA have personal support of Mrs Thatcher

Thatcher's revenge

MARGARET THATCHER is determined to break up the Inner London Education Authority. Members of the government committee investigating the future of the authority have come under intense personal pressure from the Prime Minister herself as well as from the Treasury. The enquiry itself is being run from the Cabinet Office and has been covered in a cloak of cabinet secrecy.

The plan to abolish the ILEA and divide responsibility for London's education among thirteen separate inner London boroughs is being examined by a committee under the education minister Lady Young. It was set up within the Department of Education as an inter-government enquiry and invited evidence from the capital's citizens and organisations. However, all enquiries about the committee are now met with the reply that it has been 'designated' a cabinet committee and that its membership is a secret. However, the members include ministers Gerald Vaughan (DHSS), Timothy Raison (Home Office), Tom King (Environment) and Lord Gowrie (Employment) and, at the moment, they have an open mind on the various options for the ILEA's future. The Cabinet Office is acting as the secretariat to the committee and handles all evidence presented to the committee.

Thatcher's distaste for the ILEA is attributed by many people closely involved to three fairly minor incidents. The ILEA were vigorous opponents of her plan to abolish school milk, declaring milk to be medically necessary. She was given a roasting by a High Court judge for interfering beyond her statutory powers in the closure of an ILEA grammar school. Third, the ILEA were responsible for showing up her campaign to get rid of Victorian-built primary schools as a political gimmick — impractical and based on wildly inaccurate statistics.

The Treasury are keen to abolish the ILEA because they view it as a conspicuous area of 'overspending' and because other LEAs use the ILEA's high level of education provision as a target to strive for. The reasons given for dismantling the ILEA range from its lack of democratic accountability through to its uncontrolled high cost, which is not reflected in educational standards. But the main argument is political: the Tories see abolition as a way of increasing their control over London's local government spending and of cutting back the scope of state education provision in London and elsewhere.

The bandwagon to dismantle the ILEA began in July 1979 when Wandsworth's Tory council applied to education secretary Mark Carlisle to run their own education service from 1981. They were put up to this by Carlisle's ultra-right wing political adviser Stuart Sexton. The plan had not appeared in the Wandsworth Tories' election manifesto and does not command widespread electoral support. The council claims that 72 per cent of the population favour breaking up ILEA. But this is based on an opinion poll which was resisted by council officers on the grounds that professional pollsters described it as 'so totally biased as to define the answer given'. Some 3,200 forms were sent out in a council organised postal poll. After two reminders and visits to people's homes some 1,799 were returned and of these 71.4 per cent agreed with the question asked — some 0.4 per cent of the electorate. Over half of the respondents were over 50 years old and a quarter were pensioners with no direct interest in education. An earlier equally unscientific poll in the council's newspaper, asking the same question, elicited 1,003 replies and went against the council's plan (49 per cent to 46 per cent).

The Tories claim that the break-up will raise educational standards but produce no evidence to support this and Wandsworth's Tory leader admits his council 'has no approved education policies at all and no debates on such policies have ever taken place'.

The Young committee is the second attempt to decide on ILEA's future. Last November Mark Carlisle set up a private committee of London Tories under Kenneth Baker, expecting them to say that break-up was out of the question. However, Carlisle's adviser, Sexton — who suggested the idea — secured a place on the committee, which reported in favour of break-up.

The affair is a further illuminating example of Carlisle's feeble tenure at the ministry of education. On an occasion previous to this he had found an ILEA proposal to merge two comprehensives as educationally sensible. Unfortunately one was Highbury Grove where his education minister Rhodes Boyson had been headmaster. Boyson threatened to resign if Carlisle approved the merger; he didn't.

The publication of the Baker report in February coincided with two other Tory boroughs (Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea) opting for local educational control. But when the report — which Baker tried to pass direct to Thatcher — was discredited for using wildly inaccurate statistics, Carlisle had to set up the Young Committee in April.

Over 95 per cent of the 9,000 submissions sent to the Young committee have opposed break-up and even few Tories now want to demolish ILEA. Sir Frank Marshall, a Tory Party vice-chairman and head of a detailed enquiry into London government in 1978 has said that 'only a fool' would dismantle ILEA. (He shares an office with Lady Young.) Two Tory ex-leaders of ILEA, Christopher Chataway and Lena Townsend oppose breakup as does last year's chairman of the GLC Bob Vigars.

Only two of ILEA's 20 Tory members favour break-up. One is opposition leader David Smith who used to favour direct elections to a *larger* ILEA. Sir Horace Cutler, the GLC leader, who played an influential role in selecting Smith as leader of the Tory group on ILEA, supports a break-up.

The Tories all believe that London will swing to the left at the next elections. People such as Smith believe that the best strategy is to split up ILEA so that safe Tory strongholds Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster — which are net contributors to ILEA — will be free of left-wing control: the Tories have only controlled ILEA in three years since 1965. Others, such as Vigars believe that the best way of containing the left is to keep a reformed ILEA with, for example, more borough representation.

The Tories have clearly been shaken by the support for ILEA, whatever its faults. Public meetings of over a thousand have voted unanimously for keeping the authority. There are enough people moving in and out of London for them to know that facilities elsewhere are generally much inferior. The Tories' miscalculation has been to underestimate the scope of *general* support for ILEA which would allow the problems of bureaucratic remoteness and paternalism verging on big brother tactics to be dealt with openly and uncontroversially.

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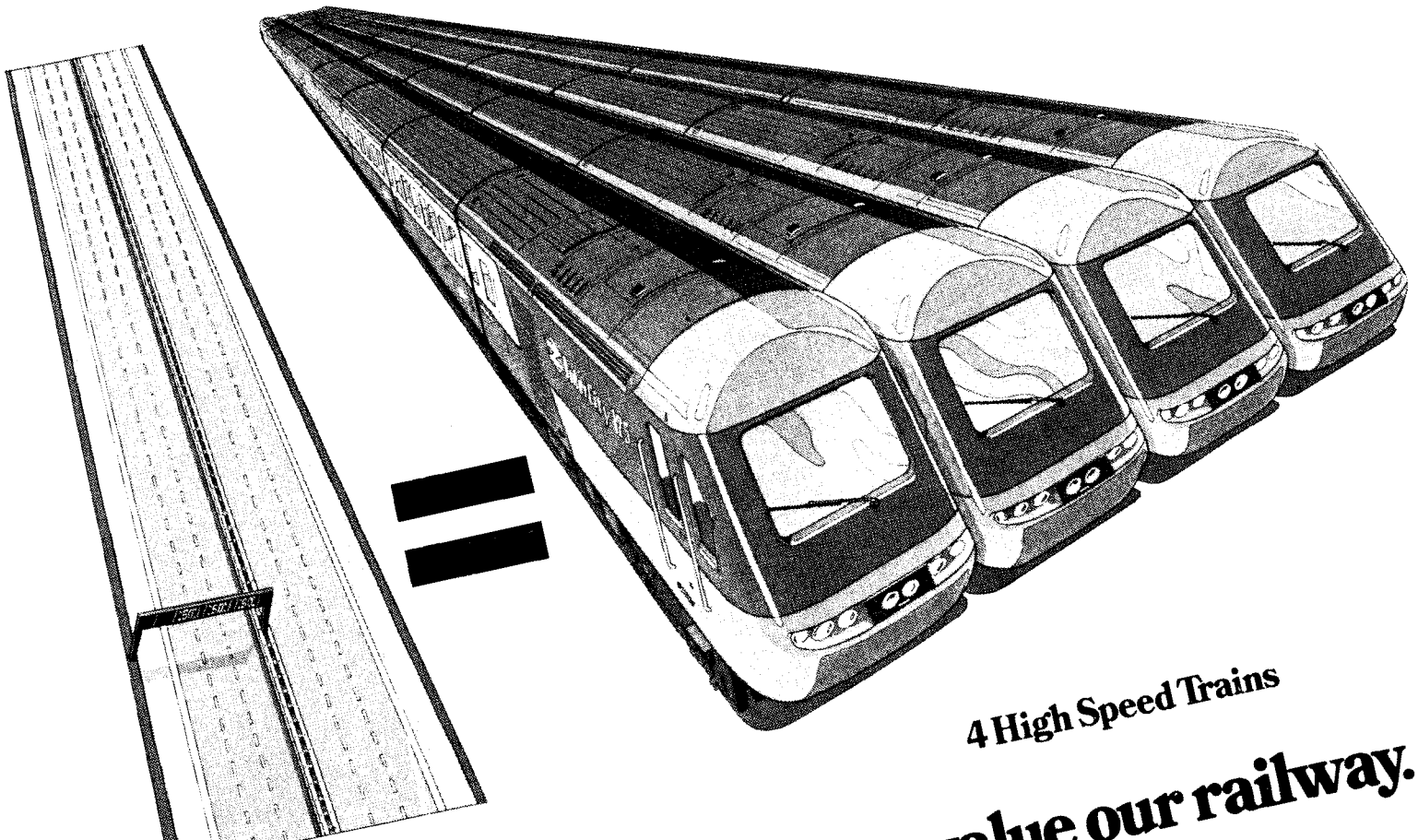

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APPLES AND PEARS

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Social benefits cannot be included in these analyses, although it is usually the case that such benefits heavily outweigh the crude financial returns.

THE ROOT PROBLEM

So long as British Rail's investment criteria are specified in purely financial terms, the allocation of national resources between road and rail development schemes is bound to cause controversy.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT
Francis Wheen

Is it too late to stop a Bill which is universally opposed?

Heseltine goes it alone

IT IS NOT unusual for British governments to introduce daft and unpopular laws; but it is hard to recall an embryonic law which had quite so few defenders as has Michael Heseltine's local government Bill. Last week, at the report stage of the Bill, Parliament debated amendments to it from 3.40 on Tuesday afternoon to 3 o'clock on Wednesday morning. Throughout that long day's journey into night the only MP to speak in favour of the Bill, apart from the responsible ministers at the Department of the Environment, was Eldon Griffiths; and even he, in a brief speech, was hardly enthusiastic:

> I cannot say with any certainty that the solution or formula that my right hon. friends have devised will necessarily work equitably. I cannot even say with certainty that their solutions will be any better than the mish-mash that they replace.

The 'solution' to which Griffiths referred was the new method of central support for local government, the 'block grant', which the Bill will introduce as a replacement for the Rate Support Grant; and it is this section of the Bill, above all, that has created such wide but unanimous opposition. The Labour Party is against it (and it must be said that Roy Hattersley has been an impressive spokesman in the many debates on the Bill); the Liberals, Welsh Nationalists and suchlike are against it; the three local government associations — all of which were Tory-controlled at the time of the Bill's introduction — have been vigorously hostile; and a number of Tory MPs are also determined to fight their own party's Bill throughout its passage. If the government ought to be concerned that the only support it had from its own side last Tuesday was the lukewarm dropping from Eldon Griffiths, it should be doubly worried by the number of Tory backbenchers who rose during the debate passionately to denounce the arrangements for the block grant. Anthony Beaumont-Dark — who is no wet, but who has the advantage of knowing rather more about local government than Michael Heseltine or Tom King, the Bill's two begetters — said that 'I have no intention of allowing my 24 years' experience of local government to be tarnished by such proposals'. Geoffrey Rippon, a former environment minister, called the Bill 'a threat to local democracy'.

Perhaps the most convincing opposition of all has come from serious academics and researchers, and this week sees the publication of two volumes which should be required educational reading for the minister. Richard McAllister and David Hunter of the Outer Circle Policy Unit have examined the government's proposals in some detail[1] and conclude:

> If present trends continue, which they will once the local government Bill reaches the statute book, then local government will become a pressure group, rather than a *government*, arguing its case at national level together with other pressure groups.

At the same time Tyrrell Burgess and Tony Travers have produced a book which not only exposes the fraudulent and misleading 'justifications' offered by the government for the block grant but which also advances an astonishingly simple solution to the difficulties of the present system of local government finance.[2]

Michael Heseltine has claimed that the central control over local authorities which the block grant will provide is required in order to deal with what he calls 'the problem of the overspenders'. Burgess and Travers reply that so far as total spending is concerned, local government has behaved remarkably well. According to the government's expenditure plans for 1980-81 local authority expenditure is now 14 per cent lower than in 1974-75, at 1979 survey prices. Spending by central government has *risen* by 7.7 per cent in the same period. If anyone's spending needs 'control' it is certainly not that of local authorities.

But if the block grant is disastrous ('totalitarian' say Burgess and Travers), and the present methods of finance distribution are also acknowledged to be unsatisfactory, what should the government do? Burgess and Travers propose that the complicated and controversial paraphernalia of the Rate Support Grant — needs element, resources element, domestic element, multiple regression formulae and so on — should be abolished. Instead, quite simply, central support for local government should be allocated on the basis of each authority's population — a straightforward per capita grant. It might be argued that this would ignore demographic differences — the fact that some authorities have more children than others, for example — but Burgess and Travers point out that the Department of Environment has had Grants Working Groups spending years trying to identify and compensate for 'client groups' of this kind, and has still been unsuccessful. They add that a powerful point in favour of their system is the coincidence of authorities with high needs and high rateable resources. Their work so far on 'cluster groups' (local authorities which are similar in social economic and demographic terms) suggests that any problems would be slight.

Such a population-based distribution takes its proper place within a financial system that gives local authorities a substantial financial base. To this end, Burgess and Travers propose that a higher proportion of local authorities' total spending should be met from locally generated income — say about 60 per cent. (At the moment only half is raised locally.) Most of this 60 per cent should come from the rates. They also propose the rating of agricultural property (which is at present exempt) and the introduction of tourist taxes and local vehicle fuel duties. Above all however, they believe that a local wealth tax should be instituted. The 1974 Green Paper on wealth tax recognised that such a tax would be levied on properties, including houses; yet it ignored that there was already a tax on houses and other property — the rates — and failed to see that the most logical wealth tax might be a local one, as an extension of the existing property tax. Burgess and Travers believe that with such a sound financial base local government could again act in partnership with national government, instead of being the impotent errand boy of Michael Heseltine's civil servants.

[1] *Local Government: Death or Devolution?* £2.50 and 31p postage from 4 Cambridge Terrace, London NW1

[2] *Ten Billion Pounds: Whitehall's Takeover of the Town Halls* (Grant McIntyre, £10.95 hardback, £4.95 paperback)

Patrick Wintour

Golden education

JOHN GOLDING, a leading member of the Manifesto Group and member of the NEC, appears to be going to absurd lengths to safeguard his position against an imagined left-wing plot to subject him to reselection as the MP for Newcastle under Lyme. The Post Office Engineering Union — which sponsors Golding and of which he is a political education officer — is forcing one of its branches, against its wishes, to accept Golding as the branch's representative on the executive of the constituency Labour Party, even though Golding, as MP, has access to such meetings anyway.

Five POEU branches are affiliated to the Newcastle Labour Party but only the 1000 strong Potteries branch has any significant number of members in the constituency. The other branches, some distance away from Newcastle, do not send delegates to the GMC and appear to send in blank nomination forms. Potteries by contrast now sends eight delegates to the GMC and feel that they should choose the person to take the executive seat reserved for the POEU as the sponsoring union. Traditionally Golding has taken this seat but this year the Potteries branch wanted one of their own branch members to take the seat and filled in the nomination forms accordingly.

It is clear that Golding was then given access to these nomination forms as he rang the branch's nominee Tony Delgano and tried to persuade him not to be the representative, saying that he would use his influence with other unions to get Delgano a place by other means. Two days later Golding reported that he could not get sufficient support fo this plan but Delgano refused to stand down as th branch's nominee. In mid-February Delgano receiv ed a letter from Norman Howard of the POEU' Political Fund Management Committee saying th committee had considered the question of the seat:

> We learn that though nominated by a number o branches Golding is prepared to give the seat t you. Before the Committee can agree to this does require a written undertaking from you tha you will follow POEU policies and that you wi give John Golding your full support. In th meantime we will ask the CLP to leave this sea unfilled.

Delgano did not reply to the letter — which wa anyway a matter for the branch — but told Goldin that he would abide by POEU policies but not give personal undertaking of loyalty to Golding. At th February AGM of the Newcastle CLP Delgan was prevented from taking the seat and the POEU delegation walked out angered at the way the chai man, Mrs Lewis, also Golding's secretary, was runr ing the meeting. There was also a row over votes fc officerships and the practice of putting Golding sup porters at the top of voting slips. The Potterie branch have now complained to the POEU's Nort Staffs and Salop political committee over the e ecutive seat. Golding's response is that it is for a the branches affiliated to the constituency, and nc just the local Potteries branch, to decide the union executive nominee. But at the same time no meetin is called of all these branches by the POEU. In Jur at a constituency meeting the secretary read out a le ter from the POEU national executive saying th Golding was to take up the seat. The Potteri branch are now to ask the POEU executive fc details of the relevant rule which prevents the loc branch choosing its own delegate.

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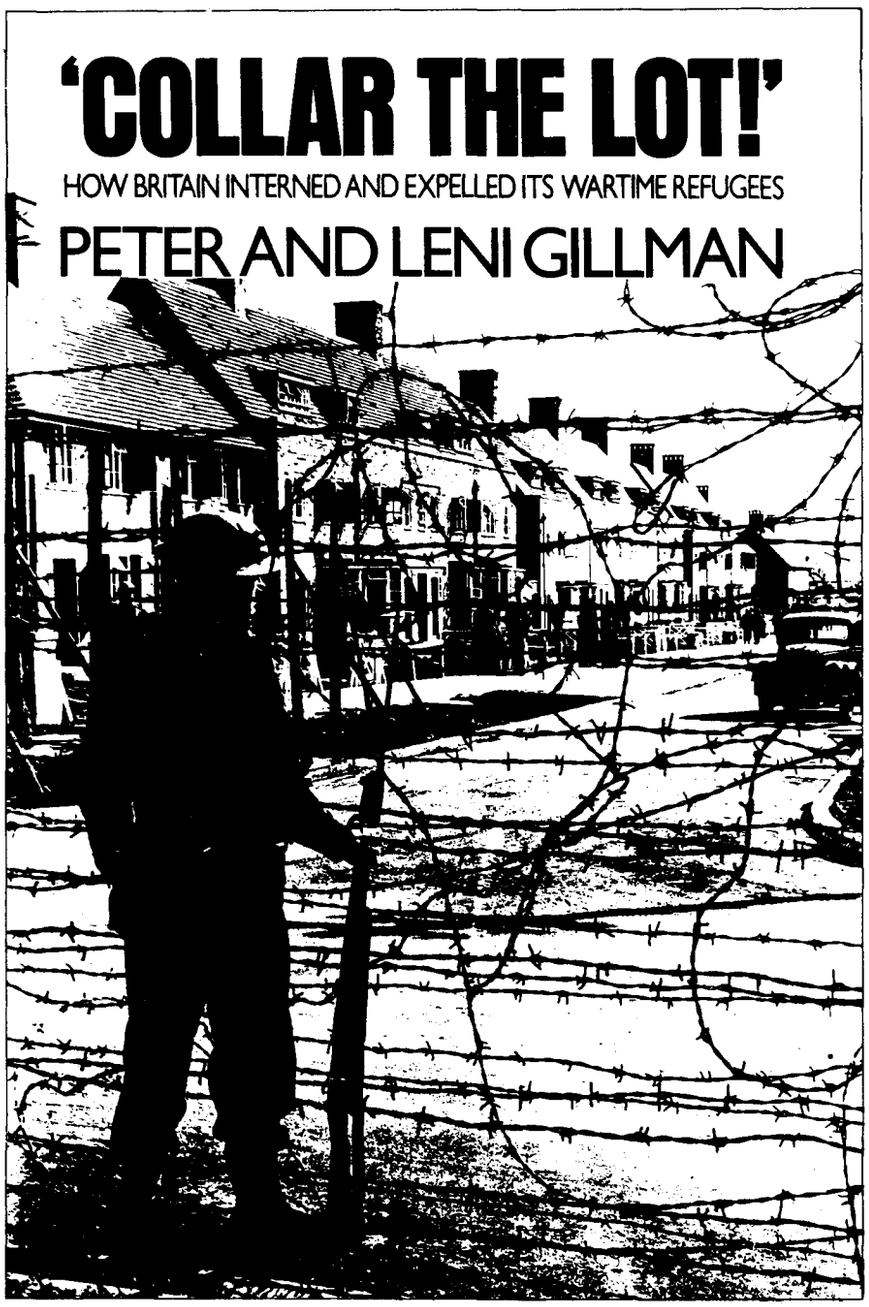

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America's big ear on Europe

'Tinkerbell' — the national phone-tap centre which the *New Statesman* revealed in February — is only one small part of a massive exercise in spying on civil and commercial communications. A much bigger role is played by America's highly secretive National Security Agency (NSA), operating from a remarkable base at Menwith Hill, eight miles west of Harrogate in Yorkshire.

Menwith Hill — unless the KGB has something even bigger — appears to be the biggest tapping centre in the world. From its heavily guarded operations room a special high-capacity cable runs underground to the Post Office microwave tower at Hunters Stones five miles away: this provides an umbilical link into the international telepone and telex system running through Britain. A direct tap which is placed on lines to France and elsewhere in Europe has been in operation for more than 15 years.

Five year ago Congressional inquiries uncovered some traces of the NSA's wholesale interception of American and other civilian communications. But the agency has stubbornly resisted all subsequent attempts to discuss any details of its $10-12 billion-worth of operations — so much so as to arouse judicial suspicions that they are unconstitutional. Menwith Hill, with rather more than 800 employees working round the clock to gather political, military and economic intelligence, is the largest NSA civilian listening-post — reflecting Britain's strategic position in the world communications net — but even trivial details have been kept secret from the US Congress. Here DUNCAN CAMPBELL and LINDA MELVERN begin the process of enlightenment.

THE MENWITH HILL BASE covers 562 closely-guarded acres of the Yorkshire Moors, festooned with a remarkable array of satellite-tracking aerials. Its business for more than fifteen years has been sifting the communications of private citizens, corporations and governments for information of political or economic value to the US intelligence community: and since the early 1960s its close partner in an operation of ever-growing technical sophistication has been the British Post Office.

The Post Office has built Menwith Hill into the heart of Britain's national communications system — and Britain, of course, occupies a nodal position in the communications of the world, especially those of Western Europe. It is not an exaggeration to say that the first stage of the Post Office's microwave network was constructed around Menwith Hill and its operations: at least five high-capacity networks feed into the base, from all parts of Britain, through the nearby Post Office tower at Hunters Stones (see map, and illustration).

One tap which we can anatomise in considerable detail — due to the documentary indiscretion of a Ministry of Works surveyor — connects at least 3,600 London-to-Paris phone lines to the listeners at Menwith Hill.

The Ministry of Defence said last week that the station 'exists with the full approval of the British government'. They did not deny that it intercepted international civil communications on a massive scale but a spokesman claimed that it did not listen in on calls across the Atlantic to or from Britain, 'or any domestic calls in the UK'.

This cautious and partial denial — the Post Office, as always, declines to discuss questions of interception — fails to deal with most of the points we have put to the Ministry. No attempt is made to deny the interception of phone calls to and from Europe, including those from North America: nor is the interception of non-telephone communication, such as telex and telegram traffic, denied. Since most of the operations of the 'big ear' at Menwith Hill would presumably be concentrated on the European side of Britain's communications, the MoD does not appear to be denying any pertinent part of our description. Given the almost total unreliability of official statements about communications interception, it is hard to know how seriously to take any part of the MoD's attempts to explain away the remarkable facilities at Menwith Hill. We have acquired some evidence suggesting that one of the base's minor roles involves the interception of phone-calls between Ireland and the UK: some gesture towards assistance with the anti-IRA campaign might make the existence of Menwith Hill more palatable to the host government. The MoD has refused to comment on suggestions that Menwith Hill could run taps on individual phone lines in Britain — such as those of people campaigning against cruise missile deployment. And a recent statement by a former USAF colonel who supervised some National Security Agency operations during the sixties reinforces the point that everything going across the Atlantic can be read by the NSA somewhere. Col. Fletcher Prouty stated in October 1979 that:

> there are three satellites over the Atlantic, each capable of transmitting on about 20,000 circuits. There are eight transatlantic cables with about 5,000 circuits. NSA monitors all these circuits, collects and records the electronic information transmitted, and its computers can pick out the messages it wants by 'key words'.

Every aspect of Menwith Hill's operations is shrouded in secrecy. But we have been informed that it was specifically identified, during secret sessions of the 1975 Congressional hearings on US intelligence agencies, and described as the larger of two centres for tapping telephone lines in Europe. Three past and present US intelligence officials also confirmed the role of the base from first hand knowledge.

One ex-NSA analyst told us that he had seen a document giving the 'secret all-civilian base' authority for 'tapping the telephone lines to Europe'. A high ranking intelligence consultant, who still works for the US intelligence community, told us that he was aware of Menwith Hill's elaborate telephone and telex tapping facilities. He had inspected the station over 15 years ago, and agreed that it was still engaged in tapping; 'I know it for sure', he said.

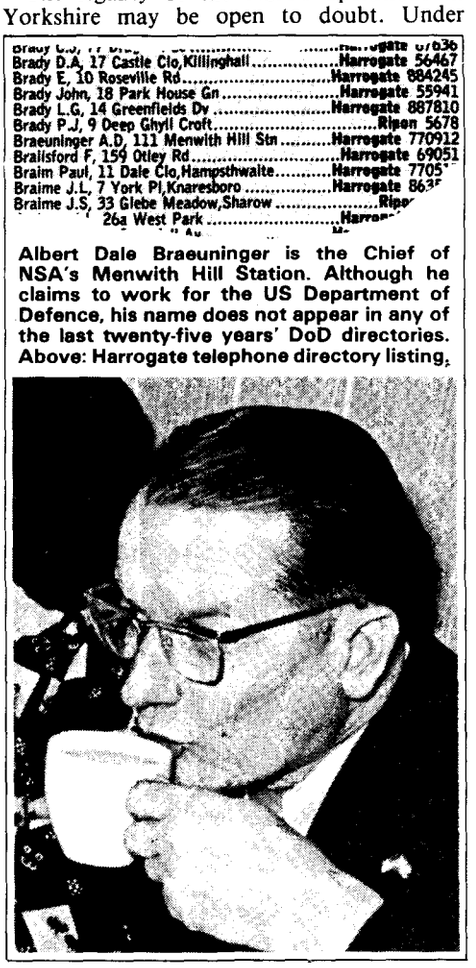
One former British military officer has had occasion to visit Menwith Hill's computer vaults. He discovered that 'it intercepts telephone and other communications to and from the United States and Europe. Computers file intelligence dossiers on European political and trades union leaders.'

THE BASE WAS first planned in 1954, but did not start operations until 1960. Initially, it was run by the US Army Security Agency, the military monitoring arm of the NSA. In September 1960, a US Army general inaugurated Menwith Hill as the 13th US Army Security Agency Field Station.

The Post Office scheme of secret links also began in 1954, and the planning and construction of both the base and its tapping network proceeded side by side until the early 1960s. The tapping network was concealed within a Post Office plan for a chain of microwave radio towers like the one in central London; this system, named 'Backbone', was supposedly going to provide emergency links if Britain was attacked. But when, after some delay, Backbone was completed, it turned out to be feeding signals into the intelligence base at Menwith Hill instead.

In August 1966, both the 13th ASA Field Station and a subsidiary base at Kirknewton near Edinburgh abruptly closed. Civilians from the National Security Agency took Menwith Hill over entirely, and it became, as it has remained, self-contained and ultra-secret.

The legality of the NSA's operations in Yorkshire may be open to doubt. Under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Braime J.L, 7 York Pl,Knaresboro.....Harrogate 863
Braime J.S, 33 Glebe Meadow,Sharow.....Ripo
26a West Park.....Harro

Albert Dale Braeuninger is the Chief of NSA's Menwith Hill Station. Although he claims to work for the US Department of Defence, his name does not appear in any of the last twenty-five years' DoD directories. Above: Harrogate telephone directory listing.

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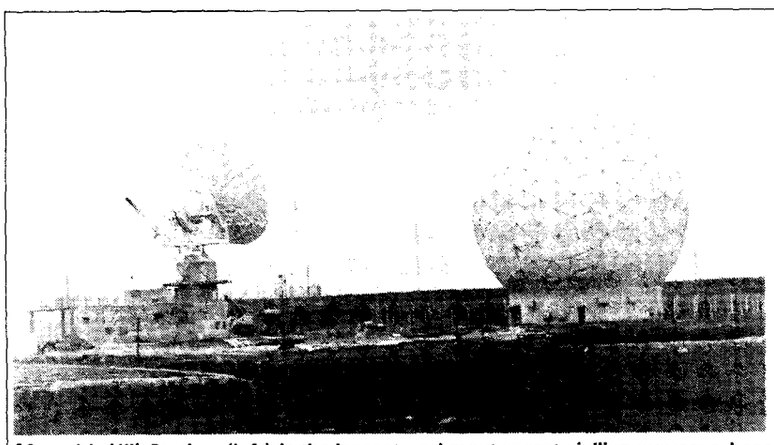

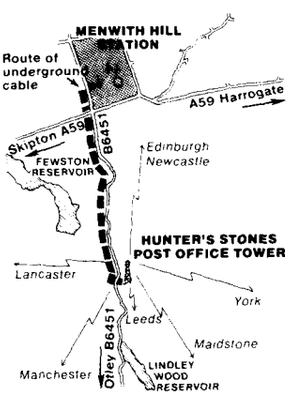

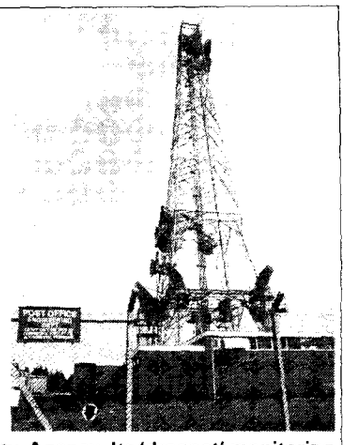

Menwith Hill Station (left) is the largest and most secret civilian overseas base of the giant US National Security Agency. Its 'dragnet' monitoring of international telephone and telex lines depends on a special Post Office network of microwave radio connections, which coverage on the tower at Hunters Stones (right), west of Harrogate, Yorks. From here, a high capacity underground cable (map, centre) runs along the B6451 road, and crosses the Skipton-Harrogate road into the base.

section 4 of the Official Secrets Act of 1920, any Secretary of State can issue a warrant for the interception of telegrams and telephone calls in and out of Britain. But the Post Office Act of 1969, which was used to justify domestic telephone tapping last year, only allows Post Office employees to intercept telephone calls for 'crown servants'. Americans are not crown servants.

The Post Office has refused to comment, and says that interception 'is dealt with by the Home Office'. Peter Archer MP, who as Solicitor General last year defended the government's orthodox tapping in criminal cases, told the *New Statesman* this week that such a massive snooping exercise 'was clearly not intended by parliament in passing the two Acts.'

Last week the MoD were 'not prepared to answer' when asked how many people worked at Menwith Hill. But a 1974 release dealing with the installation of one of its conspicuous tracking dishes said it had a staff of 800, and since then its facilities have certainly expanded considerably. All emplyees have to work under rigid security control. Family members are ordered never to mention 'NSA', and all, including children aged twelve and over, are instructed to report all contacts with 'foreign nationals'. Officials and their families have been quickly sent home for even minor indiscretions of teenage children.

NSA surveillance of international telephone lines was admitted officially when CIA Director William Colby appeared before the Pike Committee on Intelligence in 1975. But no details were revealed.

Since Colby's statement, NSA has faced repeated action in the Supreme Court by individuals and groups whose ordinary and legal civil communications were intercepted. NSA has repeatedly refused to disclose details of how it came to intercept their phone calls or telegrams, pleading that disclosure would damage 'vital SIGINT (signals intelligence) sources'.

Heading the list of facilities which NSA does not wish discussed in public is Menwith Hill. So far, no court has forced NSA to the point of disclosure, but some have decided that NSA's reluctance implies that they have illegally breached the US Constitution.

FIVE MILES SOUTH of Menwith Hill, a freshly painted sign marked 'Post Office Engineering Department — Private' denies access to a small patch of hilltop woodland. Within the woods is the Hunters Stones Post Office Tower, 320 feet high. Although isolated in the moors and away from all Britain's major urban areas, this tower has a greater communications capacity than almost all others in the system. Hunters Stones is virtually the pivotal point of more than a million route-miles of microwave radio connections which have been installed in Britain.

The microwave network links-up Britain by sending thousands of phone-calls (or other messages) along radio-beams between towers roughly thirty miles apart. Many of the details of the system are physically observable, or can be worked-out from information which has to be routinely published for engineers and others: exhaustive analysis of this material shows at least five routes feed into the Hunters Stones tower which are not used for television, telex or even orthodox defence purposes such as links to early-warning stations. Although there are conceivably even more exotic explanations for all this surplus microwave power, the obvious one is that the 'mystery' beams are taps upon various aspects of the whole system — and, in the case of the tap on the London-Paris beam, it can be traced in detail.

From a small, well-protected engineering building at the base of the Hunters Stones tower, a remotely controlled television camera, installed since enquiries were first made to the PO about the station's purpose, keeps a careful watch on anyone approaching. Below ground, five cables are installed in a small tunnel which runs beside the road north to Menwith Hill. One of these cables, paid for and installed by the Americans themselves three years ago, is the principal feed to Menwith Hill. Although only about two inches in diameter, it is protected — very unusually for robust trunk cables — by being laid in an aluminium tray within the tunnel. Such a construction indicates a massive capacity — equivalent to up to 32,000 telephone lines — which is achieved by sending very high frequency radio signals along the cable.

We visited PO engineers who were working to replace a manhole cover on the cable tunnel. They described the cable but did not know its purpose. They said that if anything went wrong with the Americans' cable 'all hell would break loose'. The engineers were subsequently warned not to speak to reporters.

During March, a colleague photographed the secret US cable in its protective tray. Since then, however, a, literal cover-up has taken place. When a *New Statesman* photographer visited the area last week, new covers had been installed over the cable and padlocked down, concealing it from view. The new covers are in addition to the normal manhole covers, which are 8 inches thick and weigh several hundredweight. The sign and surveillance camera at Hunters Stones are also new.

The Menwith Hill Station Commander, Albert D Braeuninger, does not deny the existence of the link to the Post Office. In an interview, he explained:

> We pass information through the UK communications system. Our line is cable . . . it is purely a communications link. We only use the Hunters Stones power as a customer of the Post Office.

Another NSA official has acknowledged that the main cable to Hunters Stones was indeed 'high capacity'. The Post Office have refused to answer any questions, and will only say that 'Hunters Stones is one of our microwave relay stations. The details of routing of circuits over the microwave network is something we don't discuss publicly'.

MENWITH HILL is completely and carefully isolated from the local community. Many of its staff live on an estate within the base security fence, or on other specially built housing estates. All their supplies come from a duty free 'PX' shop, and the base has its own water supply, generators, sewage facilities, fire station, petrol station, restaurants and entertainment facilities. The outer perimeter is guarded by Ministry of Defence police, who have no idea as to the purpose of the base. They maintain regular patrols, which question anyone stopping in the vicinity. The heart of the base is two massive concrete operations blocks, both extending several floors below ground, housing hundreds of millions of dollars worth of computer, communications, and satellite tracking equipment. The 'ops' area is surrounded by a triple wire fence and has armed guards.

Even outside the operations area, many offices can only be entered by means of combination lock codes. Although base commander Braeuninger claimed that the base was a joint facility, the spouse of a former senior Menwith Hill official gave a different account:

> There were no high ranking Brits. They did all the menial jobs like cleaning, maintenance and electricians for the houses.

The security precautions were intense;

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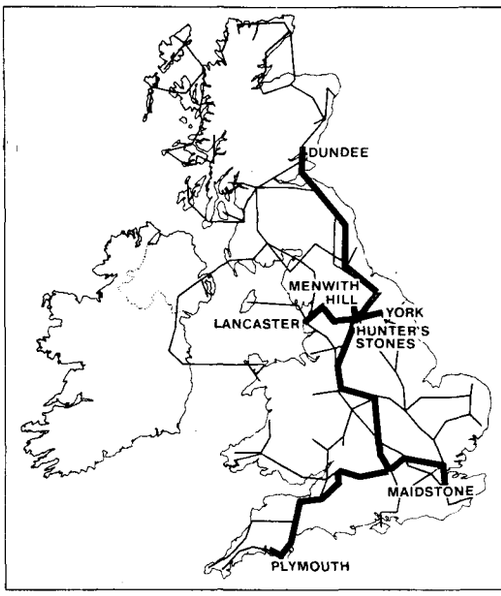
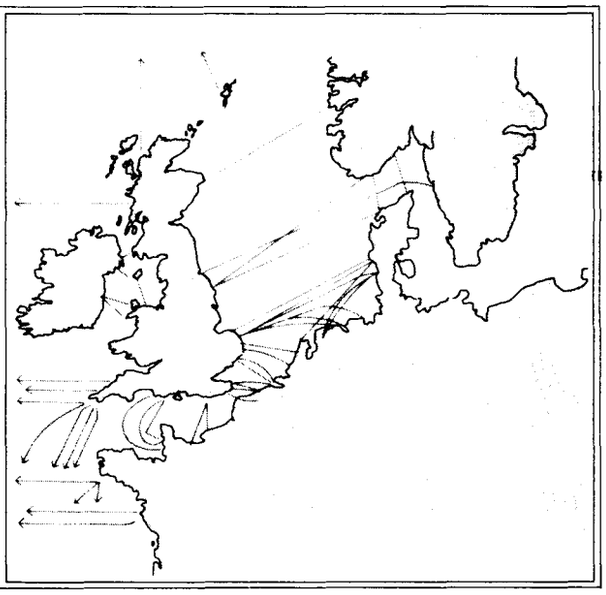


International connections . . . and taps

Britain is the hub of international communications to, from and within Europe. The international network (map, right) is composed of submarine cables and satellite ground stations; Britain's position means that London handles most transatlantic traffic, as well as calls to and from Scandinavia, and northern and eastern Europe. In the early 1960s, the special network of Post Office towers and links was built to feed national and international connections into Menwith Hill. Below Jim Haynes, a former analyst for NSA at the USAF station at Kirknewton, near Edinburgh.



Anyone over 12 going abroad is briefed first. I was taken to Fort Meade (NSA headquarters near Washington) and had a session with a security officer on my own. (No-one else) was allowed to be present. I was told that if I made friends with 'foreign nationals' — that included Brits — I was to tell my security officer assigned to me . . . We were never to mention NSA.

Such secrecy extends to US Congressional Committees, to whom Menwith Hill is a 'classified location' whose operations cannot be divulged. During a March 1976 appropriations hearing, NSA's Assistant Director for Installations and Logistics, Brigadier General Charles Knudson, asked for appropriations to lease 274 family houses for 'a classified location overseas'. In fact, NSA only has one overseas civilian installation of any size — Menwith Hill. More housing was required 'due to relocation of overseas missions and assumption of a new mission'. The secret station's work, he said, required 47 dwellings at various locations and, revealingly, 'two . . . leases (for) our senior representatives at London, England'.

THE MOST STRIKING FEATURE of Menwith Hill, to the casual visitor, is the array of satellite communications aerials, tracking dishes and protective 'radomes', which amply fill its skyline. Menwith Hill's space communications facilities have boomed since the first two dishes were installed in 1974. There are now eight, forming part of NSA's worldwide network linking Fort Meade with bases in Germany and Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean — and making Menwith Hill perhaps the largest known satellite communications terminal in the world.

The purpose of this massive capacity is not entirely apparent. According to one US government communications official, it includes ground stations for top secret CIA and NSA satellites designed to monitor civil communications from countries whose telecommunications administrations are less obliging than the British Post Office. These satellites, colloquially known as 'Sigint birds', include CIA projects RHYOLITE and ARGUS, whose existence was only revealed recently during a spy trial in Los Angeles. (Rhyolite is a dull volcanic rock containing colourful bits of quartz and feldspar — an apt label for a programme which is concerned with hosing-up via satellite masses of communications and using computer power to select items of interest.)

CIA officials, as well as those of NSA, work at Menwith Hill. One of them, Larry Schott (now returned to the US), was indiscreet enough to produce his identity card — clearly marked 'Central Intelligence Agency' — to a respected Harrogate journalist a few years ago during a particularly lively party.

Despite such slips, the worst that Harrogate has ever heard about Menwith Hill was a rumour in the early 1970s that the operations blocks were a centre for breeding 'killer flies'. This rumour was, very reasonably, denied.

THE WORLD HAD little idea of the scale of this operation until 6 August 1975, when CIA Director William Colby faced determined questioning from Democrat Les Aspin, on the Pike Congressional Committee, about NSA monitoring of 'telephone calls between American citizens and foreigners abroad'. Colby replied that:

> The Agency does monitor foreign communications . . . that go abroad or are abroad. (Traffic with a US citizen at one end) cannot be separated from the traffic that is being monitored.

Neither he nor NSA Director General Lew Allen would go further in open session.

We have, however, obtained copies of both the secret Pike report (which was later leaked to the *Village Voice* newspaper) and further details of the secret testimony on the monitoring of all foreign communications traffic..In 1976, the Pike Committee reported that:

> NSA systematically intercepts international communications, both voice and cable. Messages to and from American citizens have been picked up in the course of gathering foreign intelligence.

During the secret hearing of the Pike Committee, NSA Director Allen gave a more detailed account of how this occurred. According to one firsthand source, Allen did identify two principal British sites for this project — one in the Harrogate area and the other in 'southern England'.

But the operation which could be partially-glimpsed in post-Watergate inquiries into the intelligence-agencies' operations had been quietly growing ever since 1945 — it represents, as in Britain, a determination by secret bureaucracies to hold onto powers acquired during the Second World War, and expand them into new technological environments. Four days after VJ day, the Army Security Agency told the American commercial communications corporations that they must continue to hand over copies of all overseas telegrams.

The companies were uneasy, for to do so in peacetime was illegal, but the procedure became institutionalised under the title SHAMROCK, being taken over by the NSA when it succeeded to the Army Security Agency's operations in the fifties.

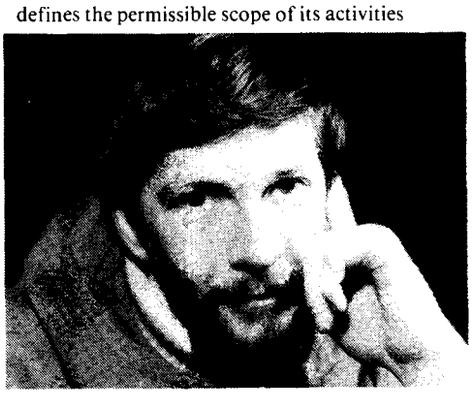
By spring 1975 the Senate Intelligence Committee under Senator Frank Church finally got wind of SHAMROCK, and in May it was abruptly dropped as being of no further value as 'a source of foreign intelligence'. Although SHAMROCK was no doubt obsolete by comparison with the facilities at Menwith Hill and elsewhere, the NSA fought bitterly to prevent any discussion of it.

They denied access to papers, and tried — after Colby's admission about the scale of NSA trawling — to entice the committee into deeply secret briefings. When Congresswoman Bella Abzug summoned NSA officials and papers, the NSA tried to invoke 'executive privilege', and, angered, the Church Committee called public hearings of SHAMROCK and other NSA operations spying on international civil communications. Church himself led off with a bold description of NSA:

> The name (of NSA) is unknown to most Americans. (Yet it) is an immense installation. In its task of collecting intelligence by intercepting foreign communications, the NSA employs thousands of people and operates with an enormous budget. Its expansive computer facilities comprise some of the most complex and sophisticated machinery in the world.

NSA, 'the largest and least known' intelligence agency was also the 'most reticent':

> While it sweeps in messages from around the world, it gives out precious little information about itself . . . no statute establishes the NSA or defines the permissible scope of its activities



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Church concluded triumphantly:

> We will bring the agency from behind closed doors.

THE CHURCH COMMITTEE didn't quite do that. While they exposed SHAMROCK and other illegal NSA operations, they gave no public indication whether similar activities were continuing. In fact, SHAMROCK had started becoming obsolete in 1962, when NSA 'was able to sort electronically the information wanted . . . against its selection criteria.'

Few specific details of these electronic searches are known. We have however pieced together details of HARVEST, a massive NSA computer purpose-built by IBM, which was delivered to NSA headquarters in 1962.

HARVEST was the biggest computer built until the late 60s. At its centre was an IBM processor known as STRETCH, coupled to HARVEST units which were capable of sifting intercepted communications at phenomenal speed. HARVEST could look for words of intelligence significance while working at a rate of 4 million characters a second — roughly equivalent to reading, sorting and filing everything in a large daily newspaper in less than a second. (It was also specially designed for codebreaking).

Menwith Hill we have learnt, received a similar but smaller IBM computer at about the same time, based on an IBM 7094 processor.

These computers, and manual analysts elsewhere, used then and still use a procedure called 'watch lists' for sorting information. The watch lists contain names of political figures, businesses, and other topics of interest.

The extent of NSA surveillance of targets unrelated to 'national security' is breathtaking. From published articles, and private information from more than half a dozen former NSA employees, we have compiled an extensive list of organisations or individuals whose calls and telegrams were intercepted, or who were on 'watch lists'. They include:

> Former US Attorneys-General Ramsay Clark and Robert F Kennedy; Texas Governor John Connally; civil rights and black activists Jane Fonda, Dr Benjamin Spock, Tom Hayden, Rev Ralph Abernathy (who succeeded Martin Luther King), Eldridge Cleaver, Abbie Hoffman, Stokely Carmichael; foreign leaders Holden Roberto and Robert Mugabe; Detroit attorney Abdeen Jabara, who defended Robert Kennedy's alleged killer; Occidental Oil Corporation; the Scientology organisation; and so on

Messages referring to these and others, including 75,000 US citizens, had been compiled by NSA computers and analysts up to 1974. Naturally, the US names featuring in NSA files are a small proportion of the Agency's output. The Church Committee noted that 'the great majority of names on the watch list have always been foreign citizens and organisations.' Their composition would be similar to that of the US list:

> members of radical political groups, from celebrities to ordinary citizens involved in protests against their government.

During 1974, the NSA collection of hundreds of thousands of files on foreign citizens and organisations was transferred to a new computer databank, called COINS (Community Online Intelligence System), which is used by NSA, CIA and the Defence Intelligence Agency, DIA. NSA is, according to one COINS analyst, by far the largest user. COINS is now used to file much of the information originating from bases like Menwith Hill. Its scope is broad, according to one report. By 1974, its spread of US citizens under suveillance included:

> prominent Americans in business, the performing arts and politics, including members of Congress.

It is worth noting, of course, that over the same period the British signals-intelligence agency, GCHQ, has conducted — without quite such lavish technical support — a very similar operation monitoring telegram traffic in Britain. Details were exposed in the *Daily Express* and *Daily Sketch* during 1967.

THE HISTORIES of Menwith Hill, Hunters Stones and the NSA itself have been closely — if very privately — intertwined for 25 years. NSA was formed in 1952, and ordered to monitor foreign communications under a top secret and still classified directive called NSCID-6. In October 1952, NSA took control of the interception operations of the US armed forces, including ASA and the US Air Force Security Service, which had just started two bases at Chicksands, near Bedford, and Kirknewton, a few miles west of Edinburgh.

Recently declassified files in the United States National Archives indicate that a criticial and secret meeting to plan Anglo-American communications and electronic activities was due to take place two years later, between two civil service committees. These were the British Joint Communications Electronics Board (part of the Cabinet Office), and its US equivalent. Declassified correspondence shows that the NSA's forerunner, the ASA, was involved in this planning.

The meeting was scheduled for 11 October 1954, but no record of the actual meeting or its agenda can now be found in the archives. Inquiries of official archivists have elicited a response that the meeting never, in the end, took place as 'joint objectives had already been agreed'.

By the end of October 1954, War Office surveyors were on site at Menwith Hill. The Post Office simultaneously began plans for its 'Backbone' microwave tower chain, and these were described in the February 1955 White Paper:

> The Post Office are planning . . . a special network both by cable and by radio, designed to maintain long distance communication in the event of attack.

This was mostly misleading flannel. In April 1955, local MP James Ramsden was told that the site was to become a 'US Army radio station'. Construction began in April 1956 and an initial seven US army personnel set up on 1 May 1956. The following year, it was retitled the 13th US Army Security Agency Field Station. But then nothing happened until June 1959.

Precisely the same delays afflicted the Post Office's plans, which were first laid in detail during 1955. We have obtained 'confidential' copies of most of these early plans, which were supplied by the PO at the time to the Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE). A detailed map, dated June 1956, shows a chain of 14 towers running roughly from London to Carlisle, via Manchester and Birmingham. The new stations would provide Britain with its first long distance radio microwave network — until then, such systems had only been used in an isolated and *ad hoc* way for carrying television.

The 1956 plan and subsequent developments show that the Hunters Stones tower was, unacknowledged, at the centre of the system. This emerges in various ways:

- The Post Office had already built a microwave system from Manchester to Scotland, which ran through Leeds. But when the new system was built, it was routed also through an additional and technically wholly unnecessary tower just ten miles from Leeds, at Hunters Stones.
- The Hunter's Stones tower came under intense environmental pressure, like many others. The Post Office shifted the two towers just north of Hunters Stones and the one immediately south, back to existing sites. But they refused to move the new site at Hunters Stones.
- Resiting the other towers meant that Hunters Stones would have to be built a costly 200 feet taller to take special links. They still refused to move it.
- The system was eventually built through Hunters Stones as planned. Soon after, east-west links were added to the system, running to York and Lancaster. Four seperate links then joined up at Hunters Stones.

LATE IN 1956, EVERYTHING came to a halt. Both Post Office and Menwith Hill plans went into suspended animation until early in 1959. In the meantime, the Post Office dried up; a letter to CPRE, in December 1956, refers to 'misgivings . . . we have been very closely examining the whole scheme again'.

The sudden silence is not difficult to explain. Anglo-American secret intelligence relationships had suffered their most serious fracture during the Suez invasion, and the US was accused in parliament of cracking British military and diplomatic cyphers. It was small wonder that Menwith Hill went into abeyance.

A recently declassified NSA 'Telecommunications Support Plan' of May 1956 shows that Menwith Hill had by then been included in its worldwide listening operations. The plan gives details of a 'COMINT Communications Relay Centre' which was built at Chicksands, Bedfordshire. Chicksands was linked to NSA, GCHQ, Kirknewton, and other British and American listening stations and headquarters.

Post Office plans were reactivated during 1959, and construction of the Backbone chain began early in 1960. Menwith Hill began to build up to strength; 32 new personnel arrived to start operations during June 1959, and the station officially opened fifteen months later. It eventually had an authorised staff of 506. By 1961, construction costs had exceeded $6 million.

THE RELIGION OF TRUTH

Truth is that which is. Our being aware more fully of this reality is a matter of the development of the relevant but normally dormant faculties. We can know much more about the inner and spiritual realms of nature than is generally realised. The religion of truth is a matter of direct experience rather than adherence to dogma and belief.

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Because of environmental difficulties, Hunters' Stones was completed later than other towers, during the winter of 1961 and was commissioned in 1962. At first, a cable was laid direct to the base, in a cross-country ditch. Using the CPRE files, and several years prior research on the contemporary PO tower network, it is possible to portray the subsequent development of the network that fed Hunters Stones:

- The first link went south from Harrogate to London. But soon after a special new route bypassed London and finished up at a tower at Fairseat, near Maidstone.
- A Ministry of Works surveyor in June 1962 inadvertently sent the CPRE a letter showing that the radio links from Fairseat would go three ways: London, Paris, and Harrogate. The third connection from Fairseat — across England to Hunters Stones — could play no sensible part in a communications circuit between London and Paris. Nor, evidently, are Harrogate and Maidstone such centres of commercial activity as to merit their own hot-line. The surveyor's letter showed clearly that the northward link was to be installed simultaneously as part of the *London-Paris* connection. It could only be a tap.
- In 1963, new links were added: east to a tower at The Stonebow in the centre of York; west, to Quernmore near Lancaster; and north to Craigowl Hill near Dundee.
- The claim that the new system was for use 'in the event of attack' was untrue. Such a system, linking radar stations and control centres, was built by the Post Office and added to the microwave network. But it was designed and built two years *after* the other links. It follows different routes.
- Since 1963, other connections have been fed into Hunters' Stones. One line branches off from near Oxford towards Plymouth. Currently, there are two other connections which stop at Hunters Stones; from Manchester, and from London.

A MAP PUBLISHED by the Post Office in 1973 provides a quantitative measure of Menwith Hill's capacity. The map shows that the four original links had each a capacity for 3600 simultaneous telephone calls in and out. This gives a total of 14,400 lines.

But the *International Frequency List*, a voluminous international directory compiled in Geneva, contains additional information. The entries in the 1979 list based entirely on information supplied by the Post Office itself, show that Hunters Stones besides relaying roughly 10,000 ordinary telephone calls, several TV channels, and data from northern early warning radar stations, has additional connections. According to this official source 5,400 additional *inward only* circuits feed into Hunters Stones, mostly from Leeds, and ultimately London.

The link to London has access to the international exchanges, and thus the whole panoply of international connections. The link to York is well placed to connect to submarine cables to Scandinavia and north west Europe, some of which leave from Scarborough. The link to Lancaster can access transatlantic cables, and connections to Ireland.

Although every section of the Menwith Hill network cannot be exactly traced, its purpose is clear. As the international communications network has boomed over the past three decades, Menwith Hill has been able to scoop up each new link abroad.

The critical phase came in 1966 when NSA took over. A USAF unit at Kirknewton (the 6952nd Radio Security Mobile) and the ASA Field Station closed on the same day — 1 August 1966. The change had been anticipated; the local paper printed a report that civilians were to take over during January 1966. US spokesmen said the story was untrue. But, by July, 70 NSA personnel were esconced in Harrogate's Grand Hotel, and the takeover had begun. Personnel and tasks were transferred from Kirknewton down to Harrogate.

One of the Kirknewton analysts who left USAFSS before the move south was a young conscript to the USAF. Jim Haynes is well known in British arts circles for his role in starting the Edinburgh Traverse Theatre, the London Arts Lab, and the *International Times* (IT). He is not well known for having worked for NSA when he first came to Scotland. He told us about Kirknewton's tasks:

> I monitored commercial telegram networks . . . between London, Paris, Moscow, Beograd, Cairo. . . Machines in intercept rooms, tuned to transmission channels, would spew out 8-ply paper. I worked on one of the plies. . .

Watch lists were used at Kirknewton. Many of the items looked for concerned commodities or financial information.

Since the early '60s, communications have increasingly been sent by cable or satellite. Thus centres for radio monitoring like Kirknewton have become outdated. In contrast, Menwith Hill's taps on international links provided the ideal input from cables.

By last year, international communications to and from Britain had built up to considerable proportions, including 13 million telegrams and 184 million telephone calls — some merely 'transiting' through Britain.

But such vast volumes are well within NSA's reach. In 1974 alone, according to the Church Committee report and other sources, NSA's HARVEST facility and others like it were, in the US alone, sifting through 75 milion telegrams in one year — 1.8 million were the sorted out for subsequent human analysis. The information gained is processed according to the requirements of Key Intelligence Questions which are political, military and economic. Commercial intelligence, after being 'sanitised', is available to large US corporations through NSA Special Security Officers attached to the companies. Much the same happens at GCHQ in Britain.

The Pike Committee report gave a useful insight into the commercial targets of US monitoring; they found:

> at least one new area of non-political and non military emphasis in international intercept — economic intelligence. Communications interception in this area has developed rapidly since 1972, partly in reaction to the Arab oil embargo and the failure to obtain good information on Russian grain production and negotiations for purchase with American corporations'.

Once again Menwith Hill, straddling the main US communications routes to Eastern Europe and the Middle East, is NSA's prime source.

Menwith Hill, according to a former British military officer and several other locally employed personnel, went on high alert at unusual times. One such occasion was when the NSA's spy ship *Pueblo* was captured off North Korea. More interestingly, however, all say that the base works overtime immediately *after* an IRA bomb incident or other terrorist activity in Britain.

The timing is revealing. It is not the base guards who go on overtime. The agents' job, one official who has worked with NSA explained in Washington, is to sift through *already recorded* communications to find a message between Britain and Ireland and elsewhere concerning the forthcoming attack. 'Tape is cheap', the official explained, 'storing an hour's call on a 1,000 line link is simple' and would use less than $100 worth of tape.

The Hunters Stones tower has direct microwave links to other towers at Lancaster and Manchester which, between them could provide access to all the lines between Britain and Ireland, as well as many transatlantic circuits. Such taps would also facilitate keeping watch after an explosion, in case of further communication by returning bombers. The inclusion of the terrorists and their ilk as NSA targets may be an inexpensive gesture made to the British government for the extraordinary facility that the Post Office has provided for NSA to spy on British communications.

THIS ACCOUNT of Menwith Hill's operations has been put, in some detail, to the Post Office, the Ministry of Defence, NSA base Chief Braueninger, NSA itself, and its Special US Liaison Officer, who is former NSA Deputy Director Benson Buffham (now billed as a 'Political Attaché' at the US Embassy).

NSA would only say that its British operation was classified, and this covered any computers there. The Post Office has had equally little to say. Albert Dale Braeuninger, Menwith Hill Chief, was initially quite forthcoming on what he claimed the base didn't do; suggestions that they monitored national and international communications were, he said 'rubbish'. Pressed for a specific explanation of its facilities, however, he resorted to waffle:

> We do radio relays [a standard euphemism for sigint] — material comes in from a variety of places and is rerouted. It is a switching operation. We route it sometimes to the UK and sometimes to the US.

Although he made Menwith Hill sound like a central London exchange, the above description scarcely refutes our relevations. Asked specifically about NSA, he retreated:

> It is not pertinent for me to discuss our organisational relationships within the UK or outside. You cannot really expect me to answer what kind of work goes on here either in a technical or operational sense.

When these and similar questions were repeated to the NSA office in London last week, and also to the Ministry of Defence, they too retreated behind familiar covers. Menwith Hill, they said, is a "communications relay centre for the (US) Department of Defence.'

We then resubmitted detailed questions to the Ministry of Defence and the American Embassy, and asked for interviews. We also asked the Home Office and the Foreign Office if they had issued any warrants for the interception of international communications. No information whatsoever was forthcoming from any of them. Whitehall, it appears, is ready to join in protecting NSA from British as well as American inspection.

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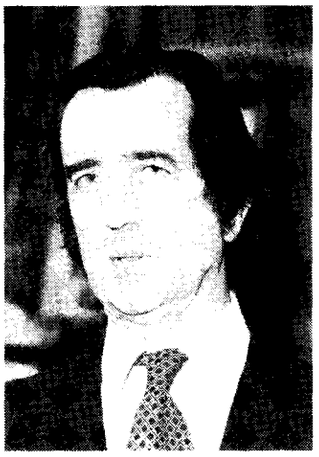
Britain's proper defence

One issue that sharply divides the Labour Party is the defence of Britain. Although there is no shortage of dispute over matters such as party organisation, incomes policy, import controls and nationalisation etc., recently more than anything else the debate over defence policy has shown real signs of sparking off considerable enthusiasm outside the committee rooms and cabals of party and union offices. The *New Statesman* has, in the past, made clear its lack of enthusiasm for a policy based on blind loyalty to a NATO strategy which rests on increasing nuclear weaponry. In the interests of full open debate, within the last month we have asked several people to contribute their views on 'The Proper Defence of Britain'. This week we publish those of WILLIAM RODGERS (right), Labour spokesman on defence. Next week ROBIN COOK, MP for Edinburgh Central replies.



I BEGIN with what I take for granted: that aggression is endemic in the world, and there is no automatic equilibrium for peace. Writing *The Politics of Democratic Socialism* at the outset of World War II, E.F.M. Durbin said:

> I find no warrant in the evidence of psychology, or of history, for believing that aggressive groups of adult human beings can be restrained by kindness, or cured of aggression by submission to their will . . . I believe that social justice and international law . . . can be based only, in the last resort, upon the use of force.

It is an unpalatable conclusion for socialists, and distaste for it underlies much of the moral objection to defence spending. But I find it inescapable.

Second, I take for granted what this country is, and could become, is infinitely preferable to totalitarian government of any kind. I have in mind all that is embraced by liberal values in a free society, whether parliamentary institutions, or, more generally, a wide tolerance of religious belief, racial origin, freedom of speech and association.

Third: that this attachment to tolerance is broadly shared in the Western, industrialised world and notably absent in the communist-dominated parts of Europe. Particularly, I regard Britain as having a natural affinity with America — the CIA and Reagan notwithstanding — and none with the USSR. The obvious needs repeating: that an American can campaign against nuclear weapons, or Vietnam, but no Soviet citizen can campaign against the Afghanistan invasion.

These points are not new, or necessarily unacceptable to most of those who protest against British reliance on nuclear weapons. But the motives that turn a protest against nuclear horror into a campaign for unilateral disarmament are complicated, and so the debate often occurs amid a confusion of rhetoric.

Take the solecism 'better red than dead'. It implies that living in tyranny is better than dying for freedom. But that is not the choice. First, it is dangerously defeatist to discount both the deterrent effect of self-defence — rarely despised in human situations — and the possibility of survival in conflict. Second, it begs the question of whether a tyranny merely denies freedom, or also denies the right to live. In the forties, many Jews preferred the possibility of death in war against Hitler to the certainty of death in a gas chamber. Tyranny offered them no choice, as Stalin's victims had no choice. Given a tyranny backed by nuclear weapons, and opposed only by countries that had unilaterally disarmed, how long would it take to free those surviving with their lives?

Arguments about diminished chances in nuclear war carry more emotional force, but questions of judgment still arise. In 1940 the Home Office assumed bombing would cause millions of civilian casualties: in the event, fewer than 50,000 people died. Almost 100,000 died in the firestorm of the Dresden raid compared with 78,000 instant deaths at Hiroshima and 40,000 at Nagasaki. Neither in nuclear or conventional war is it possible to measure accurately the chances of survival.

The fact that there would be survivors does not mitigate the awful prospect of nuclear disaster (especially if one considers genetic effects). But it is not self-evident that renunciation of *nuclear* weapons is necessarily a moral choice, qualitatively different from the renunciation of weapons generally.

Indeed, it is arguable that British unilateral disarmament is not a moral course, but a formula of hypocrisy. No-one seriously believes that in itself it would arrest the spread of nuclear weapons. No-one suggests Britain is high on the list of countries which might use nuclear weapons irresponsibly or accidentally. But just possibly Britain could play some part in negotiations for effective multilateral disarmament, contracting-out of nuclear weapons as part of a wider deal. The real moral challenge is the sustained attempt to achieve much more than anything achievable unilaterally.

Any decision about nuclear weapons should be taken by the criteria applied in all our defence planning. Given that — rightly — we retain no significant commitments outside Europe, how relevant are nuclear weapons to our proper defence? Given that we depend on collective security in NATO, what nuclear and non-nuclear obligations arise? And, given an overstretched budget together with the increasing costs of technology, what priority should attach to nuclear weapons?

Against this background, there are two different, immediate, issues. The question of whether cruise missiles should be located here turns on our membership of NATO, and NATO's effectiveness in ensuring collective security. The question of whether to replace Polaris — and if so, how — raises wider questions about the cost and value of our independent deterrent.

THERE IS no new issue in NATO-assigned nuclear weapons based on British territory: the US has operated here on that principle since the early fifties. Airfields here have been potential Soviet targets for a generation. When NATO ministers decided to go ahead with cruise, there was no sufficient reason to contract-out of their deployment here.

Was that decision right? The best case against it relies on deterrence through ICBMs based in America, or submarine-launched missiles in a strategic or theatre role: imbalance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact is thus corrected in terms of overall capability. But while NATO considers it essential to base theatre nuclear weapons in Europe, the logic of cruise is inescapable.

Without doubt the SS-20, with its three 150kt warheads, MERVed, mobile and capable of reaching Britain from Soviet bases, is a major advance in Soviet weaponry. Some 60-70 are now targeted on Western Europe, and by the mid-80s there are likely to be 200, threatening 600 separate targets. Given such stakes, a major negotiation (inside SALT) is needed to persuade the USSR to limit, then abandon the SS-20 in return for a NATO decision not to deploy cruise as planned in 1983.

The Schmidt-Brezhnev talks show that such a deal remains possible, despite Mr Brezhnev's intransigence in the period preceding NATO's decision. Does anyone really think the USSR would have been ready to consider the SS-20's future if NATO had renounced any modernisation of its own?

THE DECISION on Polaris replacement is infinitely more difficult. It requires a judgement about political developments 15 years ahead — particularly, on whether the US might begin to decouple from Europe, possibly leaving France as the sole European nuclear power. I do not object in principle to replacing Polaris, but I am deeply sceptical about whether it can be done at acceptable cost. Our NATO allies will not oppose another item in the Western nuclear armoury — but what if the opportunity cost were reduction of the Rhine Army from 55,000 to 30,000, with steady erosion of our conventional capacity as the price of the new system escalated past the £5,000 million at present envisaged for Trident?

Despite security problems, the government could have ensured an informed public debate either on the basis of a green paper or the report being prepared by a Select Committee of the House. Instead they have announced the decision that could easily have been postponed and leaves many unanswered questions. I am unconvinced that Trident is value-for-money or that maintaining an independent deterrent at such a price will prove consistent with our overriding obligations to NATO. 'Yes to cruise but no to Trident' is a perfectly logical position.

All war is horrible and most of us have an instinctive distaste for the sober discussion of weapons and their capabilities. There is a respectable anti-war tradition in the Labour movement that builds on a longer history of radical dissent. But we cannot wish away the world's growing nuclear armoury, or pretend that it has no bearing on our own peace and freedom.

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GERMANY
Claudia Wright

German officials are worried about their American alliance

The Middle East adventure

THE FEDERAL POLICE guards patrolling the offices of the Bundestag in Bonn don't carry sub-machineguns from Mauser or Walther. Instead they are armed with imports from Israel. A large share of the lemons, oranges and avocados which the Federal Republic imports daily comes from Israel, grown on territory which Bonn regards as illegally occupied by Israeli forces, and irrigated with water the German Foreign Office admits may be stolen from Jordan and Lebanon. Although by the standards of Bonn's Ministry of Economic Cooperation, Israel cannot qualify for development assistance, in fact it receives about $80 million each year in German aid, which puts it ahead of most Middle Eastern countries except Egypt and Tunisia.

These are just a few of the ironies and contradictions which surface in a week's conversation with German officials concerning the country's policy towards the Middle East, and its broader global objectives. One reason for the contradictions, most admit, is that so far, German policy has been based on guilt towards the Jewish people, and by extension towards Israel. But they point out that with more than half the German population born after the war, the potency of guilt is rapidly running out. The Foreign Office also indicates that privately it is fed up with the emotional blackmail which Israel's politicians invoke whenever Germany criticizes Israeli policy, as occurred in the aftermath of the recent Venice declaration.

When asked to define what their national interests are in the Middle East, German officials and Social Democrats fail to mention Israel at all. Instead they talk of Germany's twofold reliance on Middle Eastern oil and markets for German industrial and consumer goods. Last year, Iraq imposed an embargo on West German trade unless Bonn agreed to increase oil purchases to reduce the trade imbalance in its favour — Bonn complied — and this year, rather than attract Saudi wrath, the government negotiated a tacit agreement with the television networks not to screen *Death of a Princess*. The reward was King Khaled's visit in June.

German officials fidget uncomfortably to talk of their predicament in the Middle East, and it is with relief that they describe Germany's policies as strictly in line with those of her European neighbours. The European initiative, so-called, is the cover under which Bonn tries to manoeuvre to serve its interest, deflect the cross-pressures from the Arabs, and mollify Israel.

Regarding the US, Bonn needs the cover. On Middle Eastern issues the gap between American and German policy is far greater (though less publicized) than in any other area of collaboration. No Foreign Office representative to whom I spoke believes that the Camp David framework provides a durable basis for negotiating a Middle Eastern settlement. Most of them personally accept the PLO as the principal representative of the Palestinians, and want to see a negotiating framework broad enough to accommodate both the PLO and the Soviet Union. They go much further than any American official in accepting Palestinian self-determination, including the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their land, and emphatically reject Israeli claims to post-1967 territory and Jerusalem. Finally, the Foreign Office is unenthusiastic about the difference an Israeli Labour Party government might make if it replaced Menachem Begin. Such a change, I was told, would be one of "appearances, not substance." It is the Israelis, not the Arabs, whom Bonn blames for the failure of negotiations since 1973.

WHILE A BREAK WITH Israel can be contemplated, albeit in unattributable whispers, a break with American policy remains inconceivable. Uncle Sam meets a temperamental need virtually all Germans have for a powerful source of external respect as well as for compensation of their great military and strategic disadvantage towards the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact. It is therefore with rising dismay and tension that they are having to deal with Washington's demands for their acquiescence in new plans for American intervention in the Middle East.

Since the Shah's regime in Iran began to crumble American military planners have been quietly negotiating with the NATO allies to permit the use of NATO bases by American forces intended for action in the Persian Gulf. The hostage situation accelerated these informal soundings, into a fullblown contingency plan. But the language of the North Atlantic Treaty itself limits the scope of mutual defense collaboration to Europe, North America, and the Atlantic Ocean north of the Tropic of Cancer. It omits the Middle East altogether.

Washington has therefore sought to extend the area of NATO operations by negotiating bilateral agreements, usually secret, with NATO members to permit the use of their facilities for wider operations, and the redeployment of forces usually assigned to European defense roles to interventionism much further to the South and East.

The *New Statesman* reported (20 June) on the secret pact for this purpose recently concluded with Turkey. Similar arrangements have been proposed to Greece, Spain and Portugal. Italy has been urged to push its naval patrols into the 'gap' in the southern Mediterranean left by American sixth fleet vessels now redeployed in the Indian Ocean. If carried out altogether, in conjunction with the Pentagon's plan for positioning strike forces and battle equipment at a string of bases across the Indian Ocean, from Northern Australia to Diego Garcia and on to Kenya, Somalia, Egypt and Oman, the result will be a global militarization unparalleled since the Vietnam war.

SO FAR GERMANY has gone dutifully along. Just as the Federal Republic permitted American air convoys to use its bases for the resupply of Israel during the 1973 war, it allowed US aircraft to land and refuel on their way to and from the Tabas raid in Iran last April. At the urging of General Rogers, the American NATO commander, Germany even despatched a four-ship squadron in May to cruise the Indian Ocean. This display of German naval muscle was the first of its kind since 1945.

When asked directly whether Germany will permit its territory to be used for a future American strike in the Middle East, Foreign Office planners say they cannot resist American pressure. On the other hand, they show anxiety that by tolerating the new American plan, they may undermine the strength of NATO on the ground where it matters most — Central Europe. For this reason apparently, and also because the European members of NATO are not optimistic that their oil supplies would survive an American intervention, the NATO secretary-general, Mr. Luns, has been ambivalent on the issue. He said at the US Naval Academy on 17 June that he was opposed to widening the Alliance's operating area. A fortnight later, at the NATO ministerial meeting in Ankara, he is reported as saying that the Western Powers "must have a strategic perception that (the Alliance) is not confined narrowly to the region of the North Atlantic Treaty. Both Afghanistan and Iran, even though outside the geographical boundaries of NATO, are still nonetheless very much alliance business."

The American manipulation of NATO is upsetting, particularly so in the left wing of the PSD (German Social-Democratic Party). The indication in Germany is that if Mr. Schmidt wins decisively at the Federal elections, leftists such as Karsten Voigt will be able to push the Chancellor for a major re-evaluation of the country's foreign objectives.

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London Diary

☐ I always get a kick out of watching the law lords in action. On my first visit there, I imagined I'd be ushered into a huge hall where their lordships, in purple gowns and waist-length wigs, would be exhibited on a row of elaborate thrones in the distance. What else would befit the highest court of a legal system so firmly trapped in a Gilbert-and-Sullivan time warp? Instead, I stumbled upon a semi-circle of little old gentlemen in *suits!* And there they were again this week, to hear the case of *British Steel Corporation v Granada Television.*

So small is the room that they are hard up against the four rows of seats provided for lawyers, clients and onlookers. Five venerable heads (ranging from the crinkly iron of Salmon to the white thatch of Dilhorne) can just be seen over the top of five leather plaques which assure the doubtful, in gold lettering, that this *is* a Court of Justice. As the learned silk stands before them, they peer up and conduct a conversation with him *sotto voce,* as though they had left off reading *The Times* in their armchairs at the Garrick to discuss the menu for lunch with the head waiter.

Immediately above them, a great baroque tapestry covers the back wall of the chamber. Maidens with billowing breasts and swirling crinolines cavort among Grecian ruins with fat, joyous children and shepherds in ribbons and lace. It seems that only the combined powers of five such senior legal minds can keep the whole thing levitated. If one of them should let his concentration slip for a moment, it would crash down and engulf us all in shameless hedonism.

☐ Leading Granada's team this week was Patrick Neill, Warden of All Souls, who argued most impressively that journalists never have been — and should not now be — forced to reveal their sources. I think he will win where others might have lost and I suppose that in the name of press freedom I should be grateful that Granada was willing to pay his fee: for preparing the appeal to the Lords and two days' appearance in court, it came to no less than £15,000. The relatives of Jimmy Kelly, who have been refused legal aid and may therefore be unable to appeal against the Liverpool coroner's verdict, will confirm that justice is out of reach if you cannot afford to pay the right people to heave it down off the top shelf for you.

☐ The same fate almost befell Helen Whitfield, the Croydon girl who was refused legal aid to pursue her appeal in the first (and only) test case of sex discrimination in education. As the *New Statesman* reported on 22 February, Helen's school provided woodwork and metal work classes for boys as a matter of course; girls were excluded altogether at first, but later one or two were allowed to opt in when they made a special request. Since the arrival of the Sex Discrimination Act, this has become standard practice where schools want to keep out of trouble without disturbing the status quo — so Helen's case could set a vital precedent. If a boy is taught a subject automatically, but a girl is not taught unless she is unconventional and determined enough to demand it, does that amount to 'less favourable treatment' under the Act?

At an earlier stage of the proceedings, the Equal Opportunities Commission refused to lend its support. A public fund was launched, which raised more than £1,000 in individual donations of £5 and £10 — but sadly that was not nearly enough. So Monday delivered the best news of the week: the EOC decided, to its eternal credit, to give full financial backing to the appeal.

☐ If the worst comes to the worst and the five little gentlemen in suits rule against Granada Television, there may be compensations. I know a number of journalists, including some of the most talented and irreverent sleuths in the trade, who would not at all mind going to jail for a bit. Think of the *publicity* . . . think of the *copy!* It would open a rich seam of press reporting on the state of Britain's prison system — which urgently needs attention.

☐ Late last week I had a phone call from a man whose brother was in D Wing at Wormwood Scrubbs on 31 August last year. Remember D Wing and the Minimal Use of Force Tactical Intervention Squad? Remember the early Home Office claims that no-one was hurt? The gradual emergence of news that 52 prisoners had been injured? Remember the uncanny absence of injured officers? And the scores of angry demands for a public inquiry? Then Mr William Whitelaw ordered Mr Keith Gibson to conduct an internal investigation for the Home Office; the moderates said let's wait and see and the militants seemed to lose heart. The man at the end of the telephone wanted to know what had happened since — and what would happen next.

I told him this. Mr Gibson has completed his report. It lies on Mr Whitelaw's desk. Mr Whitelaw has promised he will tell the Commons what it says. But he will not necessarily *publish* it, so we shan't be able to judge for ourselves how many punches it pulls. And there's another catch. In February, the police were called in to investigate allegations of criminal offences committed by prison staff against inmates. While these are underway, Mr Whitelaw will not tell the Commons what is in the report — because they might lead to criminal proceedings. The police are expected to finish their investigations by the end of this month.

If criminal proceedings do not follow, Mr Whitelaw may be persuaded to relay his version of the report to the Commons. And if it sounds sufficiently grave, someone may call for a police investigation. But they've done that already — and look, no evidence of crime! Perhaps a public inquiry will be demanded once again. But what is the point of that — when the police have already established that nothing was seriously amiss?

If proceedings do follow, then Mr Whitelaw will undoubtedly claim that all or part of the report is *sub judice* — and we shall have to wait another two or three years, or however long it takes to complete the prosecution and subsequent appeals. By then, of course, the contents of the report will be tired old history. The authorities will be able to say, with enormous satisfaction, that justice has been done. And that, in a nutshell, is the story of a routine Home Office cover-up.

☐ If you failed to notice an inside-page story in the *Morning Star* last Friday, or a one-inch paragraph tacked on to the end of another story in the *Guardian,* you will probably not know that more than 2,000 people poured into Central Hall Westminster on Thursday 10 July for the first major rally of European Nuclear Disarmament — and emptied £2,400 into plastic buckets to support the campaign. The main speaker, Edward Thompson, well deserves his new status as the hero of what ought to be the most important political movement of the 1980s. He is a magnificent performer as well as a brilliant polemicist. 'I think I've said enough', he remarked modestly as his speech drew to a close. Applause began to erupt and he added: 'I *was* going to say something about Mr Rodgers, but perhaps there isn't time . . . ' This drew roars of encouragement and he read the following passage from an article in *Labour Weekly* (23 May) by the controversial Defence Shadow:

> Some three quarters of a million men and women serve in the forces today, or are working as civilians in support activities and the defence industries. Very many of these are Labour voters and if the Labour Party ceased to care about defence we should lose their support and never win an election again.

So that's what's bothering him! Poor man, to be so haunted by the spectre of eternal defeat. If Mr Rodgers would like to give me a ring, I'll tell him where to find at least 750,000 new Labour votes by *reducing* the 'defence' budget. And then I hope we shall hear no more about Cruise missiles.

Anna Coote

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ A woman convicted of unlawfully killing her husband with a kitchen knife is not entitled to a widow's allowance, the High Court ruled yesterday. — *Daily Telegraph* (Maureen Plummer)

☐ An investigation is being carried out by West Mercia police into an allegation that some of their officers were involved in an assault on a visiting detective from Merseyside police who was making inquiries in Worcester. The detective is said to have been suspected of impersonating a police officer and was taken to a police station in Worcester where the assault took place. — *Guardian* (E. Weber)

☐ Secretary Christine Vale was excused jury service by a judge yesterday — because she's too biased. Christine, 35, told Judge Jean Brahams Hall at Croydon Crown Court that she was prejudiced against the young, black people and supermarkets. — *Daily Mirror* (D. Campbell)

☐ The wife of Britain's 52-year-old Employment Minister has sat opposite her husband while wining and dining top trade union men in her elegant London home. And she says that these fearsome fellas are as good as gold when sitting round her polished dining table, eating off delicate bone china. She adds: 'They're not at all the ogres they're made out to be. When you meet them, you're quite surprised to find they are perfectly normal, decent human beings.' — *Sun* (Jonathan Holmes)

☐ Dr Roger Mugford, an expert in animal behaviour, has become officially recognised as a psychiatrist for dogs. He visits bad-tempered dogs at home and tries to stop them attacking people and sheep. His fee is £20 a visit. — *Daily Telegraph* (Russell Holmes)

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Fact and fiction in uranium

From Mr L. Clarke

Martin Bailey's note (NS 4 July) on Namibia comments that 'Britain now depends on Rossing for no less than 42 per cent of her civilian uranium requirement'. A little background data puts this fact into sharper perspective. Over the past few months, several articles about Namibia/uranium/Angola etc., have appeared in the conservative British press, all more or less echoing the South African government's official propaganda line. Not untypical was a *Daily Express* article in March, which in tub-thumping language classed Sam Nujoma, leader of Namibia's indigenous guerrillas, as 'Moscow's stooge' and warned shrilly that 'if anything ever went wrong' at RTZ's Rossing uranium mine (such as a Namibian guerrilla victory in their own country), then 'the lights quite literally would start going out all over Europe'.

Once being a geologist of sorts, I decided to check out this clear implication that Europe's electricity generation depends crucially on Namibian uranium from Rossing. I wrote to the Canadian High Commission, and they obliged with a copy of a very recent article in the *Canadian Mining Journal,* quoting specific facts and figures from the non-political, international Uranium Institute. These prove in precise detail that there is not only an enormous current glut of uranium oxide — both actual and potential — in the world, *but that glut will continue well into the 1990s.* Canadian suppliers alone could instantly replace Namibia and be very glad to do so.

One need hardly spell out what kind of a light this puts on Britain's determination to (apparently illegally) mine only *Namibian* uranium. The real facts also illuminate the true nature of all statements suggesting that any break in Namibian uranium supplies would immediately cause an electricity shortage throughout Europe. Indeed, one hopes that the UN hearings on this subject will trace such fictions to their original source.

1 Middle Road, Denham, Uxbridge, Middx

BBC response

From John Rae, Head of the Monitoring Service

Your article on the BBC Monitoring Service (NS 4 July) was not wholly inaccurate. We are indeed engaged in listening to open broadcasts from foreign radio stations, and all our output is certainly available to the press and public (for a small fee). It says so in the BBC Handbook. Most countries monitor foreign broadcasts nowadays; not many as openly as we do though (a recent visitor was a Moscow TV correspondent). So it's a strange story you tell about the material we monitored in Malawi being supplied secretly to the Rhodesian and South African authorities, either by the Malawi Government, the FCO or the BBC, or possibly all three. Why should those authorities have wanted anybody to tell them what their own, state-controlled, radios were saying (for that's what we were monitoring)? The Rhodesians, I'm sure, were doing their own monitoring of neighbouring radio stations — as do the South Africans. They had no need of — and certainly did not get — any assistance from us. Whoever was running the 'Voice of Free Africa', broadcasting in Portuguese to Mozambique, would have been incredibly silly not to have listened to the output of Maputo Radio. There was simply no point in the exercise your article alleges took place.

Then there is the matter of our awful associates: the FCO, for instance, and the CIA. The BBC has its disagreements with the FCO from time to time but has never regarded it as a particularly sinister organisation. It would be very negligent of British interests if it did not want to know what Moscow was saying about the Schmidt/Brezhnev talks or Colonel Qaddafy about the fate of Libyans living in Britain. I dare say there are some aspects of the CIA's activities we would not approve of, but the Foreign Broadcast Information Service does on behalf of the US Government exactly the same sort of work we do (and its reports are also freely available on subscription). Our co-operation goes back to the war years, long before the CIA came into being. It has been publicly acknowledged on many occasions and is good for Britain and the taxpayer. You too, Sir, and any of your readers can reap the benefit by taking out a subscription to our *Summary of World Broadcasts.*

BBC, Caversham Park, Reading RG4 8T2

Turkish response

From Miss Tanzer Özkut, Acting Press Counsellor

I have read very carefully 'Turning a Blind Eye to Torture' (NS 4 July). As the writer points out, the allegations of torture mentioned are being thoroughly investigated by the relevant Turkish authorities and therefore I think it would be inappropriate for me to comment on them until the outcome of these investigations. However, there are one or two points which call for immediate clarification.

In spite of what Ms Tessa Brown says, the martial law authorities are indeed taking these allegations very seriously and have already initiated a full investigation. On the other hand, I am afraid Ms Brown does not seem to have understood the tradition of, and the role played by the Turkish armed forces. Trying to show them as having sowed the seeds of violence in the Turkish community is nothing but an intentional misrepresentation of facts. Friends and foes have always expressed great admiration for the military discipline, integrity and high moral values of the Turkish armed forces.

Her reference to the film *Midnight Express* and her following remarks are equally deplorable. Every Turkish character depicted in that film is either corrupt, or cruel, or at least inhuman in his dealings with the prisoners. Had she known more about Turkey and the Turks, I am sure she would not have made such an ill-judged comparison.

Turkish Embassy, 43 Belgrave Square, London SW1

Images of violence

From Professor Steven Rose

Too much. In the years since the opening of the Nazi camps, pictures of atrocities have already been filmed and photographed so frequently that they have lost the ability to shock, educate or even mobilise. Napalmed Indochinese children burning to death became a teatime TV accompaniment for their luckier Western counterparts of the 1960s and 1970s. The special effects skills of the film-makers have got to the point where real blood seems more like ketchup than that which comes by courtesy of Pasolini or Peckinpah.

The mixture of references to the real and the fictional is not accidental — in a world of factoids and instant replays of each other's griefs the differences are becoming hard to hold on to. But it is important that we try, if only so that we can, when the time comes, distinguish the sound of the sirens broadcasting the four-minute warning from the voice of Orson Welles proclaiming the Martians have landed.

Why publish the photograph of the disfigured corpse of Mr Mehmet Yolagelmez, then? Those with the political and moral sensibility to protest (yet another example of) obscenity will do so on the printed word without the Doubting Thomas necessity to see, smell or touch death on stage. For the rest, the picture will go the way of dying Oxfam babies or Hammer horrors. Let us passionately protest the Turkish atrocities, along with many others. But don't, even in this small way, add to them by denying the dignity of the privacy of his own death to Mr Yolagelmez.

Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes

Power point

From Marion Woolfson

Robert Wistrich's competence to review my book, *Prophets in Babylon: Jews in the Arab World* (NS 11 July) may perhaps be judged by the anti-Arab diatribe contained in his pamphlet, *The Myth of Zionist Racism,* which is supported by the 'evidence' of Albert Memmi who, according to Dr Wistrich, 'exposes the myth of an idyllic Jewish-Arab relationship in Muslim countries . . .' Yet (as I made clear on pages 168-9 of my book), Albert Memmi has been totally discredited in Israel. Victor Halba, an Israeli writer, accused Memmi of 'publishing lies and slanders' and emphasised that he had 'presented no documentary or bibliographic evidence'.

As for my 'whitewash' of 'the miserable plight of Syrian Jewry today', I cannot help wondering who is better qualified to judge, considering that I have visited Syria many times during the past eight years (the last occasion was two months ago) and my evidence was supported by that of other journalists who had also actually visited Syria. It is untrue to say that I chose to 'omit altogether' the pro-Nazi leanings of some Arab leaders as I referred to this subject on pages 156-7. It is also untrue that I was guilty of 'failure even to mention the fate of other minorities . . .' as reference was made to this topic on pages 41-46, 66-68, 74-75, 87, 133 and 153.

Dr Wistrich's dishonest review refers to the 'myth' of Zionist provocations in Arab countries without revealing that I provided a mass of documentary evidence (from Zionist sources) on this subject. Another grave distortion is that I 'dismissed' the 'Kurdish national-liberation movement as a CIA-Israeli backed conspiracy'. In fact, I provided — with copious documentation — irrefutable and officially-acknowledged evidence of CIA and Israeli support for Mulla Mustapha Barzani.

35 Camden Mews, London NW1

Doomsday disavowed

From Rosalind Whibley

A curious footnote to the nuclear warfare 'debate': Italian television has just started a season of films by Peter Watkins; no prizes, though, for guessing which one is missing. RAI's request for *The War Game* was refused. Why don't the BBC want Italians to see a 15-year-old film?

Intero 19, Viva Arno 5, Rome

Attitudes to gypsies

From Councillor Ian Claymore

Your article (NS 13 June) made certain statements about Wolverhampton Council which were incorrect. The eviction from Pendeford (not Tenderden) Airport took place on 6 May (not 19 May) and none of the itinerants, so far as I am aware, decamped to a piece of landscaped ground, although this has happened on frequent occasions in the past.

More particularly, the Council never has employed the firm Spook Erections to evict itinerants nor have they employed at any stage a private firm for this purpose.

The implication of the last paragraph of the article is that the Wolverhampton Borough Council has a 'total block prejudice' against itinerants. Your article makes no reference, however, to the part this Council has played in the West Midlands Regional Planning Authorities' Conference in encouraging the provision of additional sites for itinerants throughout the West Midlands Region.

8 Sandwell Road, Oxley, Wolverhampton

In point of fact

From Martin Walker

Your wisdom in paying such attention to Basil Davidson's account (NS 4 July) of a time when British progressives could proudly work in British Intelligence is marred by errors of fact. Fitzroy Maclean did not 'quit the Foreign Office in protest against Munich'. He did not in fact leave the FO until after war broke out, and he did so by the ruse of claiming that he would stand for Parliament (which he later successfully did). Nor are you correct to say of his story that Churchill was prepared to back Tito and the Communists in Yugoslavia, in spite of post-war political implications, that 'only 30 years later did it come to light'. The tale is engagingly told in that classic text, Fitzroy Maclean's own *Eastern Approaches* (1949).

c/o 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1

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FIRST PERSON
Arthur Marshall

On the dot

If I seem to harp a little more often than is, perhaps, acceptable on life as it was lived in the early 1920s at my prep school, Stirling Court on the Hampshire coast (proprietor, J. Macdonald. No fee-paying pupil ever refused admittance), it is because to have been removed from home at the age of nine and placed in cheerless and outstandingly unsybaritic surroundings was a traumatic experience that will be with me to the grave and beyond, if beyond there be, and in this connection several kind readers have written to assure me, though on what solid body of evidence they do not say, that there is an after-life and that we can all look forward to enjoying bridge fours with the illustrious and mighty dead ('Attila, you've revoked!'). Macbeth who, when in the mood, could come out with some quite good things (thoughts on tomorrow, for instance), remarks on his very first entrance that he has never before seen so fair and foul a day. Plainly he was not educated at Stirling Court. There, sharp and rapidly changing contrasts of grief and joy, sunshine and shadow, pain and pleasure were the pattern of our every waking moment.

In addition to the ordinary privations and indignities and inadequacies inseparable from a prep school that, disloyal of me though it may be to say so, was not really absolutely in the first rank, there was a quite sensational amount of bullying and when I first went there, the school prefects (six of them, and aged a good old thirteen and a half) were allowed to administer beatings and called themselves the Star Chamber. The beatings were given, not with a cane in the normal manner but with something rather worse. Further along the coast there was a sea-plane base and among the abandoned equipment and bits and pieces that were always lying around, somebody had discovered lengths of stout rubber tubing nearly an inch thick and of an elastic nature, and used, presumably, as some sort of shock-absorber. These were brought home and put into punitive use and managed to be quite extraordinarily painful. Nobody dreamt of complaining and you had to wait to blub until you were out of sight and sound of your fellows.

Another form of physical torment concerned hair. An older boy would come up and say 'Do you like champagne?' It mattered little what one produced by way of reply ('Yes', 'No', or 'Oh do buzz off, Phillips') for he then seized the pieces of one's hair that would one day be side-whiskers, tugged down on them and said, 'Sham pain' (get it?) and then pulled up on them and said, as indeed it was, 'Real pain'. This jolly prank continued at regular intervals until, happy day, one was old enough and large enough to start doing it to somebody else ('Oh do buzz off, Marshall').

Prolonged unhappiness has never been either my lot or my line and gradually one accustomed oneself to the homesickness and to being away from gentle treatment and loving kindness. There was too a compensation in the person of a contemporary, a plump, smiling and fearless boy called Williamson who, when nobody else was brave enough to own up to this or that misdemeanour (madness to speak if undetected), frequently owned up for them, though entirely guiltless, and just for the fun of the thing, and he took subsequent punishment without complaint. A peerless chap. If indeed there are those bridge fours up aloft, Williamson will be there ('Six no trumps!'). We spent much of our time laughing for our senses of humour ran along parallel lines and there was much in our scholastic life (Mrs Macdonald's Sunday hats, for instance) that seemed to us to be robustly diverting. Excessive laughter was, as I shall shortly be demonstrating, by no means popular with the adults who ministered to us.

We were both, having been extremely well grounded previously, quite good at French. I do not now recall the name or author of our French text books but they, in the sentences they provided, had an old-fashioned ring and one disastrous day when we were in class and in the middle of a lesson, I saw Williamson's shoulders begin to shake (perhaps you may recall that he had, in church, discovered in the prayer book a list of persons whom he was not allowed to marry, among them being his grandmother, and for weeks we had teased him with 'Proposed to Granny yet, Williamson?'). Pushing the book towards me, he pointed to a sentence in a forthcoming exercise and I read 'My sister cannot marry for her dot is but small'. Though we knew perfectly well what a dot, in this connection, was and had been told that no foreign girl could consider herself to be a satisfactory marital catch without a substantial dowry, the form of the sentence sounded irrestistibly comical and suggestive and one began to twitch. In due course, we were required to translate it *('Ma soeur ne peut pas se marier car elle n'a qu'une petite dot')* but it sounded just as risible in frog. There was no hope at all of restraining or concealing our merriment and our shrieks rang loudly out. We were reprimanded, sent to Mr Macdonald and cross-questioned as to the reason for our laughter. Williamson, of course, told the truth, silly donkey, and we were both subsequently beaten for 'nasty-minded sniggers'. Quite right too. However, to keep our parents happy, such shortcomings were never allowed to be mentioned in our end of term reports ('Arthur has had a good term and is developing nicely'). My father and mother were always ready with a kind 'well done, dear' while I tried not to look smug.

Looking back, I now suspect that the Macdonalds, both of whom seemed immeasurably ancient, were busily saving for their retirement for the school's outgoings had been thriftily pared to a minimum and virtually nothing at all was done in the way of entertaining. There was no Speech Day and no Prize Giving, prizes coming in the form of five shilling postal-orders to spend as we saw fit. No City buffer ever came down and addressed us. Occasionally we ran competitively here and there but there was no formal Sports Day, which might have required a marquee and, for the adults, a jug or two of claret cup. A number of activities were classed as 'extras' and had to be paid for (Hobbies Class: 10/-). None of the masters had, and no fault of theirs, been at a university and there was not a gown to be seen. They came and went, and some of them went in the middle of the term. The teaching of geography and history, both of them such easy subjects to make interesting to small boys, was deplorable. But, taking it all round, I was happy there. French, English and Mathematics were extremely well taught and caused no trouble later on. And furthermore I had something to look forward to, for I was to go on to Oundle, where I had already been taken by my parents and where I had already been captivated, as were so many, by the rosy charm of the headmaster, Kenneth Fisher. At our first meeting, when I was twelve, he assumed a mock look of horror at the sight of me and said, by way of being jolly, 'Oh dear, and when does this blow in?', an extremely unheadmasterly question which delighted us all and we remained firm friends for life. For me, a very happy happening.

And while on scholastic affairs, let me in gratitude put a joyous matter your way, in the shape of a book about a prep school master and of such a hilarious nature that I had to give up reading it in public as my shrieks were causing both surprise and annoyance to those present. It is called *A.J. Wentworth, B.A.* and it is by H.F. Ellis, a marvellously funny writer with a remarkable track record, and Messrs Weidenfeld & Nicolson will be glad to sell you a copy for the, nowadays, trifling sum of £5.95. Though it is fictional, the very initials of the hero, A.J., and the name of the school, Burgrove, have a splendidly authentic ring. Wentworth, gently ragged by the boys, is first cousin to Mr Pooter and what is known as 'a dedicated schoolmaster' with all that that sometimes implies in the way of mild pomposity and humourlessness. We see him both in the classroom and in retirement, when few things go quite according to plan, and both are entirely rewarding experiences. If it's laughter you're after . . .

Roger Woddis
Ode to joy

'You might say that we are following the Beethoven approach to weapons systems planning . . . finding a good theme and hitting it over and over again.' — William J. Perry, US Under-Secretary of Defence for Research and Engineering.

Joy, thou lovely bride of power,
Married to the Pentagon,
Thou shalt still survive the hour
When the rest are dead and gone!
Thine is not to comfort others
Asking for their daily bread;
All shall call upon their mothers,
Where thy cruising wings are spread!

They who fear the final terror,
Heedless of the peace it brings,
They who raise the risk of error —
Let them speak of other things!
When the storm of war is blowing,
God will guard us night and day;
Jesus, what is good for Boeing
Must be good for William J.!

Joy, thou lovely spark of gladness,
Lighting up the sullen earth,
Moving sober men to madness,
Bringing brighter worlds to birth!
He who seeks to end confusion
Finds his rest in thy embrace;
He who lives in self-delusion
Dies with egg upon his face!

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Geoffrey Hosking

Thick End of the Wedge

The Oak and the Calf: Sketches of Literary Life in the Soviet Union by ALEKSANDR I. SOLZHENITSYN translated by Harry Willetts *Collins/Harvill* £8.95

These are no ordinary literary memoirs. Far from being tranquil recollections of a lifetime's development, they were hurriedly put together at particular turning points in Solzhenitsyn's career. They were intended as a record, in case disaster should befall him, to expose the 'crippling and cowardly secretiveness' which surrounds the party control of literature in the Soviet Union. In other words, they are essentially extended battle notes, which paradoxically also serve the function of ammunition dumps, to be fired off, along with *Gulag Archipelago* and everything else, if their author should be silenced (military metaphors seem to be unavoidable in discussing this work, if only because Solzhenitsyn himself continually uses them). They were assembled for the first time and published soon after Solzhenitsyn was expelled to the West in 1974. The English translation has taken a long time, but it has been well worth waiting for, as it is unusually sensitive to Solzhenitsyn's vigorous language, with its numerous changes of tone and viewpoint.

What these 'sketches of literary life' illuminate is something of momentous importance for the evolution of the Soviet Union, the breaching of the state's monopoly of mass communications and the creation of an alternative network, *samizdat*. When Solzhenitsyn poked his head out of the self-imposed underground where he had been writing down his labour-camp testimony, *samizdat* scarcely existed. The name, in fact, did not exist at all, and the practice of typing out copies of one's writings and passing them on systematically was confined to a few maverick poets, who brought out talented collections of verse with names like *Sphinx* and *Phoenix*. As a vehicle for the long-concealed testimony of the Gulag martyrs, that must have seemd too frail. For what Solzhenitsyn had to tell was part of 'the essential truth . . . about our age, which is not entirely made up of prisons, executions, camps and places of exile, but which cannot be told in full if you overlook them'. That is why he decided to turn instead to an established bastion of official Soviet literature, the journal *Novy Mir*, or more particularly to its editor, Aleksandr Tvardovsky. His choice was absolutely right for the time. Tvardovsky had established a tradition of his own, adapting the democratic humanism and the literary realism of the famous 19th-century Russian 'thick' journals to use as a weapon for exploring the faults of Soviet society. More than any other man, Tvardovsky was ensuring the revival of genuine literature in a country where Stalin had almost stifled it.

Solzhenitsyn was right for another reason too. Tvardovsky was a peasant by origin. He had come to fame as a poet thanks to his literary creation, Vasily Tyorkin, the good-hearted Red Army peasant lad, whose unforced human qualities helped to sustain many a Soviet soldier through the ordeals of the second world war — including Solzhenitsyn himself. Tvardovsky reacted no less strongly to Solzhenitsyn's labour camp peasant, Ivan Denisovich. He first cast his eye over the manuscript after going to bed, but, struck by the measured honesty of the story and the demotic vigour of its language, he got up again, dressed, and sat through the night reading it. Even Khrushchev, on whose word the ultimate decision for publication depended, apparently responded to the earthiness of the piece (though his response was also partly motivated by his current de-Stalinisation campaign). As Solzhenitsyn puts it, while admitting he did not calculate it this way: 'the muzhik Ivan Denisovich was bound to arouse the sympathy of the superior muzhik Tvardovsky and the supreme muzhik Nikita Khrushchev.'

The 'superior muzhik' is by far the most detailed portrait to emerge from these memoirs — though one that is particularly subject to retrospective distortion. Solzhenitsyn's relationship with Tvardovsky was heartfelt and stormy. They were literary allies (more perhaps than Solzhenitsyn allows) and would have liked to have been close friends, but could never quite become so. Tvardovsky found it difficult to reconcile his rustic straightforwardness with the mixture of guile and servility which his service to literature demanded of him under party tutelage. Solzhenitsyn gives us a blow-by-blow account of the manoeuvres Tvardovsky had to perform to get his works published, and these sections of the memoirs are especially valuable from the documentary point of view. Never before have the literary bureaucrats and the party's cultural functionaries come to life so vividly. Tvardovsky wanted to believe that the party was still, in spite of everything, fulfilling a great historical mission. He could not advance the cause of literature without carrying a party card, and his integrity forbade him to carry one without faith in the party. 'Whenever Tvardovsky's (poetic) self felt strongly attracted to a manuscript, he had to test the feelings of his second (political) self before he could publish it as a work of *Soviet* literature.' From time to time, he would drown the inner conflicts thus engendered in massive bouts of drinking.

Towards 'his' writers Tvardovsky behaved like a warm-hearted feudal lord: he devoted himself absolutely to their interests as long as they kept their tacit oath of fealty, and did not offer manuscripts to other journals, still less (horror of horrors) cast them loose on the *samizdat* circuit. This, of course, was where he came into conflict with Solzhenitsyn, whose view of his literary rights was equally lordly, but entirely different. He saw himself as the custodian of the testimony of millions of trampled and forgotten *zeks*, entitled to speak out 'by right of memory' (to borrow a title from one of Tvardovsky's poems), and indeed specially chosen by God to do so. For him *Novy Mir* was from the outset a means, whereas Tvardovsky had come to identify his journal with the fate of Russian literature itself. Naturally, therefore, there was friction between the two men, even at the times of their closest cooperation.

That is one reason why Solzhenitsyn's view of Tvardovsky is sometimes unexpectedly critical. But there is another reason too. By the time he wrote his memoirs Solzhenitsyn was much more confident about the potentialities of *samizdat* than earlier, and he tends, therefore, retrospectively, to attack *Novy Mir* for not taking a much more outspoken and principled stance from a much earlier stage. His own discovery of *samizdat* was, however, gradual and partly accidental. In 1964 he impulsively gave some short prose poems to friends to read, indicating that they could 'be shown to good people'. To his surprise, they came out a few months later in the émigré journal *Grani*. Up to then, his *zek*-like reaction to trouble had been to hide everything he had written and pray not to be found out. It only dawned on him slowly that there was nothing more to lose, and that in fact publicity was a *protection*, not a threat.

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Solzhenitsyn was not, in fact, always an uncompromising opponent of party rule in literature, as he often suggests. In the early days of his exit from the 'underground' he was quite prepared to 'lighten' his works of their most inadmissible passages, and even to write one or two weak but politically opportune works like *For the Good of the Cause*. The curious thing is that he is absolutely honest and lucid in tracing the evolution of his own literary practices and political views, and yet feels able to reproach others for not having developed his later convictions earlier than he did himself. (For his part, Tvardovsky also came gradually — though inevitably later than Solzhenitsyn — to realise the full importance of *samizdat* and the possibility of principled and frank opposition to the regime. By the time he was forced to resign his editorship in early 1970 he was probably much closer to Solzhenitsyn in outlook than the latter is prepared to recognise.)

Western critics have often noted inconsistencies of this kind in Solzhenitsyn's utterances, and wondered how it is that a man whose criticisms of totalitarianism seem so honest and humane can yet prove often to be unsympathetic and even downright intolerant in his personal outlook. In the labour camps he underwent a religious conversion, which he describes in *Gulag Archipelago*, and he came out of them convinced that he had been elected by God to bear witness to the suppressed truth. What is puzzling is that the works written thereafter in the 'underground', especially *Ivan Denisovich* and *The First Circle*, show little trace of his predestinarian theist convictions. On the contrary, they evince a humane scepticism, an openness to experience and to others' outlooks which do not seem to concord with their author's professed belief. It is in the later works, *August 1914* and *Lenin in Zurich*, that we find an unmistakable theist impulse.

Perhaps the truth is that the discovery of *samizdat* and the 'ideological extraterritoriality' it conferred upon him gave Solzhenitsyn a sense of power which reacted with his long-held beliefs to produce a new sternness of outlook. The letter to the Fourth Soviet Writers' Congress in the spring of 1967 may have been the turning point. This was his first open challenge to the regime, consisting as it did of a condemnation of the censorship and of the servility of the Writers' Union in the face of political pressures. It is also, significantly, the time at which he began to write his memoirs. Certainly it was after that point that Solzhenitsyn started to compose his long-meditated cycle of novels about the revolution (of which only *August 1914* and *Lenin in Zurich* have so far appeared).

The truth is, I think, that in *The Oak and the Calf*, as in *Gulag Archipelago*, we have in fact two Solzhenitsyns at work. While the field-marshal surveys his battle formations and issues his orders, the shrewd and sceptical novelist is standing at his side, noting down all his inconsistencies and foibles. One must never underestimate Solzhenitsyn's capacity for 'polyphony', that is to say, for assuming two or more narrative voices almost simultaneously, allowing each to reflect on and question the other. This is true of all his best works, early and late. There is a good example of it in his account of his eventual arrest and expulsion from the Soviet Union (the Soviet leaders having decided that an 'alternative government' in their own homeland was too much for them): here the self-appointed positive hero is continually being restrained by the keenly observant, self-aware novelist. He admits candidly how all the long thought-out preparations for arrest came to nothing because it all happened in a slightly unexpected manner; how the carefully nurtured resolve to behave in prison in a spirit of dignified non-cooperation melted before the familiar depersonalising routines of the Lefortovo. And even as he braces himself for the imagined negotiations with Brezhnev and the Politburo, in which the future of the Soviet Union will be decided, he is simultaneously laughing at himself for imagining that the walls of the Kremlin will collapse at the first blast of his trumpet.

The French critic Georges Nivat once said: 'In Solzhenitsyn the voice of others takes precedence over his own . . . If he is to remain Solzhenitsyn, Solzhenitsyn should not find his "own" definitive voice.' This is a profound judgment. Solzhenitsyn has, it seems to me, always been at his best when he is able to function as a 'voice from the chorus', letting other voices mingle with his own, not letting the 'Olympian narrator' within himself gain the upper hand. This was pre-eminently true (despite their wholly different dimensions) of *Ivan Denisovich* and *Gulag Archipelago*. It is also true of the best parts of these memoirs, and not least perhaps of the picture of Tvardovsky, who somehow succeeds in bouncing back from the body blows Solzhenitsyn the 'Olympian narrator' directs at him and standing out as a fully rounded personality. In

AN UNHUSBANDED LIFE
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Andro Linklater

'Excellent . . . a valuable and serious piece of work' *Sunday Telegraph*; 'Admirable . . . his book is stuffed with facts one is glad to learn' *Sunday Times*; 'Fills a gap in the history of the women's movement' *Daily Telegraph* £8.95

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HUTCHINSON

SAGE: A LIFE OF J.D. BERNAL
Maurice Goldsmith

This masterly biography illuminates the many-sided character and achievements of the brilliant scientist who was, among other things, wartime scientific advisor to Lord Mountbatten. 'A very good read . . . The evidence from Earl Mountbatten is truly fascinating' *Sunday Times* £8.95

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spite of himself, Solzhenitsyn responds to Tvardovsky's greatness and communicates it.

The 'inside' picture of the warm but mutually watchful relationship between these two great men is the outstanding feature of *The Oak and the Calf*. Looking back a decade later, one feels that both of them were probably right in their literary strategies. Tvardovsky and Solzhenitsyn both, in fact, still haunt the *bien pensant* hacks of the Soviet literary hierarchy.

Simon North

Circus

As a child I learnt the circus
Of absurd marriages,
The clown faced parodies
Of original passion — the clumsy fall!

I was silent judge
Of informed cruelties, the provocative
Assertions of will in public,
The debate of the displaced vase.
I witnessed the slow world
Of the trained tortoise they christened Cecil;
And the hurtful times
Of tortuous loyalty
Or peevish resentment
Of the settee
Covered with a pattern
Of greedy children;
Or when the dog died.
Their minds
Moved along
The years' corridor.

Something has gone awry
With these men and women — scarred idols
Whose idolatry has soured; you sense
Their dim-lit interiors.
You sense the dross of faith
In their worn habits . . . .
So is love always
Thus filtered and cut
To produce distant replicas?
Or else spread out distantly
A number of urgent collisions?

Judy Cooke

On All Fours

Company by SAMUEL BECKETT *Calder* £5.50
Kolyma Tales by VARLAM SHALAMOV *Norton* £5.95
Scars and Other Ceremonies by CHRISTOPHER LEACH *Dent* £5.95
Staking Claims by PAGE EDWARDS *Marion Boyars* £5.95
Stroganov in Company by CARYL BRAHMS *Robson* £7.50

In *Company* Beckett sets the fact of human desolation against the fiction that significance can be given to it, or any comfort found. He examines the lure of creation, the temptation to summon up 'company', whether this be a personal past, or a literary persona — even, indeed, a universe.

'A voice came to one in the dark. Imagine. To one on his back in the dark.' For a time the listener is captivated, encouraged to establish a present reality and, in a sequence of flashbacks, to consider the possibilities of memory, parentage, an Irish childhood. The voice is increasingly audacious. Why not create light? Why not imagine *another* voice, perhaps this time in the third person? A choice is posited between the more and less tolerable authorial positions i.e. lying with the head lifted or lying with the legs straight. 'One in the dark' concludes that company isn't worth all this effort. 'And how much better in the end labour lost and silence. And you as you always were. Alone.' Alone and blind: Milton's response was the celebration of art and the justification of God. Beckett tells us that art is merely another way of lying; his God crawls on all fours like Blake's Nebuchadnezzar, bereft, stinking, 'even fouler than his creature'. A bleak enough narrative, brief, exquisitely phrased.

Shalamov's *Kolyma Tales* describe life in Stalin's forced labour camps, where conditions would seem to militate against any response but despair. Not so. These 24 stories, drawing on a wide range of character and incident, read like fragments of an epic. The deprivation is calculated and terrible: somehow, men survive. A soldier organises a rebellion which is doomed to fail but provides death on his own terms. Two intellectuals pass themselves off as carpenters and stay in the warmth of the workshop long enough to beat the winter. A scriptwriter turns 'snake-charmer', recounting whole novels for the amusement of the chief villain in the camp criminal world. There is degradation and torture, starvation, the horror of a mass grave. Not easy to take, yet the overall impression is one of diversity, energy and the will to live. In Shalamov's case, this last has been fully tried. He was sentenced for championing another writer and served 17 years in Kolyma; on his release, he was required to sign a document stating that his work was 'no longer topical' and, to date, only his poetry has been published in the USSR. He is fortunate in his translator and editor, John Glad; the stories read fluently and forcefully, and the best can hold their own anywhere.

Next, two anthologies which are alike in one respect: they build up atmosphere from story to story, working out variations on a central theme. Christopher Leach's *Scars and Other Ceremonies* is grim and spooky; as the title suggests, he deals in the macabre, the violent and the supernatural. He gives us a death pact undertaken by a bunch of sinister Walter Mittys, a case of stigmata in Bible-belting Georgia and hauntings of various kinds. 'Rook' is a Hitchcockian vision of nature in which damaged birds, dying kittens and diseased rabbits gang up on a compassionate man. 'Maestro at Midnight' is dear old sex and violence with an artistic twist. 'Scars' is a manhunt with a difference. Leach can spin a skilful yarn; in his hands the innocuous is bound to turn out diabolic but it's always impossible to predict exactly how, and when.

Staking Claims by Page Edwards caters for different tastes. The book's cover shows an apple with a bite out of it, together with a padlock and chain; the stories are about lost innocence, frustration, compromised love. They are New England grown, quiet and truthful, scrupulously plain. A young man marries and settles to work his father-in-law's land, almost without meaning to, almost resentfully. An East Coast girl feels 'the pilgrim's longing for something fresh', gets pregnant, follows a loser of a husband to Colorado, is bitterly disillusioned and catches the plane home. Edwards views his characters with compassion but so far eschews the dramatic that he runs the risk of seeming dull.

Stroganov in Company is entertaining and engaging, Caryl Brahms at her excellent best. At a time when the shade of Diaghilev is lording it in Shaftesbury Avenue it's a pleasure to find that other doyen of the dance, dear Vladimir, socking it to them in Santa Fé, his *corps de ballet* 'a gaggle of straggle-tailed swans', at his side the cocaine-pushing Bishop of Chi-hua-hua. The master continues to astonish and scheme, aided and belaboured by his indefatigable *Maitresse-de-Ballet,* Arenskaya. At La Bazouche, a resort which is 'by no means Cannes', they spot a suspicious character in the stalls.

'Is that my antique good friend, Mr Kalmanski, the Impresario from New York? What he do here?' Arenskaya's voice had an edge to it. She,

Angus Wilson

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Thomas Hinde, **Sunday Telegraph**

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too, leant dangerously from the box.

'What he do?' she repeated. 'Do not tell me, I know. He is here to sing the song of the siren to charm our Ballet away to New York where Clive Barnes kills us!'

The character Stroganov was first created by Brahms in collaboration with the late S.J. Simon. A full-length ghost story of theirs, 'No Nightingales' has a style and charm that keep it green in the memory: good to be reminded of that book by the group of stories here in which Brahms gently lampoons the English. 'No Minstrels' gives us plenty of ghosts; Miss Dullwater and Mrs Multifarious share the billing with Lavinia the Lethal and the Bloody Cardinal. The English abroad are also well represented; show biz gets a look in; there are seven Chekhovian vignettes and a classic short story 'Hear!' which evokes a whole world in two pages. A virtuoso performance, witty, inventive, sometimes a little sad.

Theory & Experience (4)

ROBIN BLACKBURN contributes the last in a series about contemporary British Marxism

AFTER BEGINNING WELL the 'Theory and Experience' series has drifted away from proper consideration of the debate on Marxist theory and history. The last contribution, by Alex Callinicos (NS 27 June), though billed as a review of *Arguments*, managed to gesture at nearly everything that Anderson has written apart from this book.

Till recently editor of *Socialist Review*, Callinicos employs his 'review' of *Arguments* to recite once more the Socialist Workers' Party's official litany of grievances against *New Left Review*. It comes as no surprise that his successor, Chris Harman, repeats the same well-worn themes in the current issue of the party journal, declaring — ultimate SWP insult — that Anderson's work is 'not the sort of book to arouse bitter arguments in the works canteen or even the student bar'. The rather pathetic philistinism displayed here, in which the socialism for which we struggle must conform to the horizons of today's canteens and bars, allows Harman-Callinicos to revert to more reassuringly familiar topics. Thus for Callinicos *NLR* has 'abandoned' its analyses of English capitalism, after their 'demolition' by Thompson — if he really means this, let him look at Tom Nairn's famous essay on 'The Twilight of the British State' (1977); it has failed to be 'self-critical' for having introduced European Marxism into England — socialist theory would have been greatly impoverished without this European dimension but the *Review* always strove to be appropriately critical in its very introductions (see *Western Marxism — A Critical Reader*, 1978: the title speaks for itself); it has not acknowledged the centrality of the working-class in the struggle for socialism — perhaps he should glance at its discussions with Raymond Williams in *Politics and Letters;* heinously, it has not devoted itself to 'building the revolutionary party' — read the SWP. To this charge, *NLR* must plead guilty: but one wonders whether even Callinicos believes that it would have been a better journal if it had been subject to the direction of the SWP? The SWP's lack of intellectual influence is to be attributed not to the nefarious activities of the *NLR*, but to its own indifference to elementary standards of accuracy and discrimination. Thus Callinicos allows himself the following facile name-calling:

> A reaction to his earlier idealism seems to have led Anderson dangerously close to the vulgar materialism of Kautsky and Stalin, a collapse signalled by his recent enthusiasm for Sebastiano Timpanaro's rather crude and trivial *On Materialism*.

The intellectual standards revealed here are their own condemnation.

Let me try to turn to some of the discriminations that should be made between Thompson and Anderson, which have been insufficiently ventilated till now. Christopher Hitchens (NS 13 June) mistakenly implied that Anderson largely accepts the Thompsonian criticism of Althusser. Anderson does agree that on certain points Thompson identifies important weaknesses in the Althusserian system — notably the absence of empirical controls and the one-sided notion of differential historical time. But Anderson also seeks to show that much of the Thompson polemic is quite misconceived: for example that many of Althusser's categories were derived from historiography rather than denying it; that his reworking of historical materialism led towards, not away from, empirical studies; that the faults of Althusser's politics were not archeo-Stalinism but neo-Maoism; and much else besides. Anderson shows that Thompson's arguments were not based on a scrupulous reading of Althusser's work, or on a just estimate of the achievement of those who have worked in the space opened up by Althusser: Poulantzas, Therborn, Wright, Bois and many others. So far as the *NLR* was concerned Althusser's materialist 'deconstruction' of Marxist categories enabled new problematics to be identified. Both Juliet Mitchell's analysis of women's oppression and Tom Nairn's discussion of the specificity of the British social formation owed something to Althusser.

IN MY VIEW both Anderson and Thompson fail to identify exactly what is wrong with the Althusserian conception of 'differential historical time', according to which there is no chronological identity between the different levels of the social formation: the economy, the polity, ideology and science. Much of recent Marxist research has been devoted to exploring the necessary unevenness between, and within, these different levels, and to avoiding the perils of what Althusser has rightly termed an 'expressive totality', which attributes to the given complexity of the world the simplicity and coherence of an idea. But though Thompson and Anderson discuss different ways in which historical time subsumes its own unevenness and irregularity, they do not stress the special contribution made by the economic order following the rise of the world capitalist market. Political and ideological systems may appear to defy historical time — Britain, Saudi Arabia and Iran would supply some striking examples of this — but in so far as they are obliged to survive without the world market they will encounter the limits of 'relative autonomy', since capitalism is capable of corrupting or condemning even the most tenacious or passionate attachment to the past. Ultimately, as Trotsky put it, history has a *combined* as well as uneven character.

Secondly, I think Anderson is able fairly consistently to show the weaknesses in Thompson's account of Whig parasitism, of the making of the English working class, of Morris's socialism, by drawing attention to crucially important *political* dimensions of

Angus Wilson

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class struggle that often tend to be overlooked by Thompson: the primitive accumulation promoted by Hanoverian colonialism, the impact of nationalism during the Napoleonic wars, the complex scenarios of socialist revolution in Morris, the Sino-Soviet determinants of Althusser's philosophy. On these points Anderson supplies an indispensable corrective to Thompson.

Anderson and Thompson have sharply constrasting approaches to historiography and socialist theory. Anderson is inclined to draft a meticulous, even elegant, map in which the main geographical features stand out in bold relief. Thompson is a landscape artist who marshalls marvellous masses of colours but is quite capable of entirely omitting the awkward or the unsightly. But it might be said that the cartographic approach does miss something in the achievement of both Thompson and Althusser, just as Thompson's aversion to politics, in the strict sense of the term, leads him to underestimate its direct relevance to questions which do concern him.

Both Stuart Hall (NS 30 May) and Anderson have pointed out that there is more in common in the work of Althusser and Thompson than the latter's polemic might lead one to suspect. Both assert a very large degree of autonomy to culture and both are preoccupied by a critique of bourgeois social relations. *The Making of the English Working Class* may be incomplete as an account of early 19th-century Britain, yet it superbly documents the cultural achievement of the democratic and proletarian movement of the time: the first systematic indictment of capitalism in history. Richard Johnson has argued that Thompson did not identify the limits of the early anti-capitalist critique, but prior to the appearance of Thompson's work one of the richest sources of scientific socialism — one which certainly had a major impact on Engels and Marx — was largely hidden from view.

Similarly with William Morris. The political scenarios in *News from Nowhere* are indeed remarkable, yet his utopian conceptions seriously flawed, in the ways Anderson suggests. But the insight of Morris's politics was the direct fruit of the profound rejection of capitalism to be found in those essays recently published under the rather misleading title *Political Writings*. Morris's critique was based on a Marxist political economy but neither Marx nor Engels wrote such a direct and relevant indictment of capitalism as a civilisation. Today it is fairly easy to accept that in various ways capitalism doesn't work: inequality, unemployment, crisis and so forth. Morris's critique drew out that aspect of Marxist thought which indicted capitalism's successes as well as its failures: its organisation of the labour process, commodity fetishism, plunder of natural resources. Anderson does not have very much to say about the importance of reappropriating this aspect of the legacy of Morris's socialism. Similarly he does not dwell on the implications of the 'Western Marxist', or Althusserian, critique of bourgeois social relations. Though Anderson carefully charts the impact of Althusser on political science or history he does not explore the role of Althusser's work in encouraging new directions in socialist feminism, in the critique of ideology or in cultural studies.

BUT I DO NOT mean to propose too neat a contrast between Anderson's political focus and Thompson's social history since both writers are more complex and interesting than this would suggest. In various ways which Anderson documents Edward Thompson tends on occasion to mythicise our ruling political institutions rather than clearly delineate the structures of domination they represent which have to be broken. Thus Thompson's polemic against the 'security state' has been couched in terms of an appeal to ancient English liberties and the integrity of Parliament. On the other hand he is instinctively in sympathy with that passionate refusal of bourgeois society which is the distinctive product of revolutionary socialism. *The Making* recaptures a Britain which came closer to a revolutionary crisis, in the strict sense of the term, in 1832 than at any other period since the Civil War. Similarly, as Anderson shows, William Morris, despite his reputation for being a pious 'socialist humanist', was actually much closer to being a revolutionary in the Leninist sense, and a more trenchant critic of reformism than either Marx or Engels. Thompson adopts a Burkean diction these days, though we are entitled to hope this will prove a passing rhetoric. But the well-spring of his politics lies in the popular experience of fighting against fascism together with the Communist partisans of occupied Europe. Thompson has little time for Lenin but his best work stems from a concern with the achievement of those whose political stance was more insurrectionary than is his own today.

Anderson does not devote much space to consideration of the cultural anti-capitalism in the work of such writers as Morris, Benjamin, Adorno, Althusser, Williams or Thompson yet the most salient landmarks in his map of socialist thought invariably include such works as *Minima Moralia, Culture and Society,* and, now, *News from Nowhere*. His open advocacy of revolutionary politics goes together with a decided rejection of either social democratic or ouvrierist philistinism.

Marxist politics in Britain are too often reduced to a choice between a dessicated sub-Leninism, or a diffuse culturalism, of social-democratic or Euro-Communist hue. The Thompson/Anderson exchanges, together with recent debates on the work of Williams and on Hobsbawm's 'Labour's Forward March Halted', point the way to a more robust and audacious Anglo-Marxism.

Helen McNeil

Uses of Desire

Adultery and the Novel: Contract and Transgression by TONY TANNER *Johns Hopkins* £9.75

Love and Marriage: Literature and its Social Context by LAURENCE LERNER *Edward Arnold* £12

Tony Tanner's brilliant study is only apparently about adultery as defined by Jowitt, only apparently about the novel as described by Leavis. If it is appropriate to describe a work of deconstructive criticism as being 'about' anything, then *Adultery and the Novel* is about the word 'in', about how structures of desire operate within structures of fiction. According to Tanner, the fiction in turn has been formed and deformed by those same insatiable desires. For Tanner the relation between adultery and fiction is close to the point of incest. This is partly because he sees both adultery and fiction as inherently 'transgressive' forms (including even mainstream 19th-century realism). Partly is it because he describes only adultery-in-the-novel, a state which, like poetic love, cannot exist outside the fiction in remotely the same form.

Laurence Lerner's *Love and Marriage* is about, among other things, 'real' adultery; it traces social and psychological attitudes towards heterosexual love as they appear in European literature from the Middle Ages to Doris Lessing. His *Love and Marriage* is an ambitious survey, ambitious because it aims at being a major source book of attitudes, and a survey because Lerner tends to take his literary evidence straight, discussing literature according to its major theme and titling his chapters 'The Contest of Love and Marriage', 'Choosing a Mate', and 'Married Love'. He leaves little allowance for love or eroticism as vehicles for multiple meanings. For Lerner, the unusual pressure the Victorians put upon married love was the result of 'displacement of religious feeling into sexual love', the end product of Petrarchanism. 'Marrying Laura', as Lerner calls a sub-chapter, means changing her name and her being to Mrs Micawber. Lerner's indictment of Mariolatry and the Petrarchan tradition is so familiar because it's generally true.

Tanner doesn't follow the social or religious

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is a major novel and his longest text since the sixties. Described by *The Times* as 'joyous optimism expressed by an unrivalled master of the English language, the finest verbal artist of the twentieth century', it is a deeply moving projection of mind and imagination in language of poetic magnificence. (£5.50). *Frescoes of the Skull* by James Knowlson and John Pilling is a fascinating exploration of Beckett's later prose and drama (£12.95). *The Haunting Tales of Nathaniel Hawthorne* contains the best work of the American master of spine-chilling fiction (£7.95).

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history of forbidden love seriously beyond noting the tripartite categories of temple, city and field set out in the Hebrew Book of Laws. For him adultery will always be, metaphorically speaking, what it once was legally: criminal conversation. As a passionate, transgressive exchange of words, bodies, and impulses, adultery sums up the essence of all desire, at least the way Tanner, following Jacques Lacan, sees it. In this specialised meaning, desire is the name of the failed effort to mediate between our insatiable instinctive needs and the demands we make through language. 'Longing' may be a better word. Tanner's Preface says that his book was written 'blind' because 'I wanted to try having my say in my own way', but, as George Steiner has pointed out in another review, that 'way' has been paved by the theories of Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roland Barthes, and Jacques Lacan.

The result is a work rich in its poverty. In his three long analyses, Tanner systematically impoverishes Rousseau's *The New Heloise,* Goethe's *Elective Affinities,* and Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* by neglecting their human and social impact. Yet in dealing with these three novels, he is never once reductive; if anything, the works grow in their potential. *Adultery in the Novel* is a work of considerable importance for theory of fiction because it makes the reader take prose fiction as some compulsive, over-determined, absolutely vital linguistic exploration, as if all novels were complex but culturally central myths structurally analysed by Lévi-Strauss.

Tanner's concern with 'pattern', 'desire', and 'negation' (his three key words) suggest an autonomous theory, that curse of idealism. Certainly his view of fiction as structures of failed desire doesn't wait to be proved by the texts he discusses. He seems at his happiest leaping from the *Iliad* to *Cymbeline* to *The Mill on the Floss* in the Introduction. 'Blind' reading also means that Tanner doesn't hold himself responsible for giving a full interpretation, so that his long chapters on Rousseau, Goethe, and Flaubert actually function as a kind of homage to the Anglo-American tradition of close reading, rather than continuing it. In fact, structuralist or post-structuralist criticism doesn't fit in at all well with close reading. 'Deconstruction' assumes that the existence of the written work presupposes the presence of meaning (rational or irrational). An authorial voice or persona doesn't have to be assumed, and the text shouldn't be translated into what it is 'about'. Unfortunately, the new post-structuralist who stares too long at the figure in the carpet may find that he is merely discovering, with a 'Eureka!', some of the many textual strategies or habits of mind put there by the author, just like the squinty-eyed old New Critic on a theme-and-image hunt. In the case of highly schematic writers like Goethe or Flaubert these strategies will have been woven in deliberately.

For a book by an accomplished critic which shows such confidence in revealing the structure of mind in the structure of text, *Adultery and the Novel* displays its French influences with a strange insistence, as if they were magical fetishes, which in some ways they are, since the Lévi-Strauss-Barthes-Lacan trinity (with Jacques Derrida's *Of Grammatology* not far behind) both covers up and reveals Tanner's deep pessimism about achieved meaning in both literature and life. With or without his French references, Tanner is what Geoffrey Hartman, in the recent *Deconstruction and Criticism,* calls a 'boa-deconstructor', a critic who squeezes the text to extract its nothingness, enjoying 'his own style of disclosing again and again the "abysm" of words'. As Tanner says, adultery is 'a silence and an absence in the text that gradually spreads'.

Meanwhile, back in the bedroom, a third of all European and American woman were committing, or actively contemplating, adultery, to cite the evidence of the 19th-century novel. *The Red and the Black, The Scarlet Letter, Anna Karenina, Effi Briest, Jude the Obscure,* and *The Awakening* only begin the great roll of dishonour. Part of the fascination of adultery for the 19th-century writer must have been the way it makes one think about the enormous gap between static symbolic roles such as mother, daughter, sister, wife, consumer, angel and whore and the actual women who tried to live these roles in historic and personal time. Many other private and public stresses can be dealt with in this kind of story, indeed many male writers use it partly as a vehicle to talk about their own creative transgressions. After adultery, maturation is the second great subject of the 19th-century novel, but since women matured into the nothingness of bourgeois marriage, the novel of adultery functions, albeit ironically, as the novel of female maturation; adultery is about the only new thing a married woman could do.

Towards the end of Goethe's *Elective Affinities,* the lovely, earnest young Ottilie has been minding the infant child of her friends Eduard and Charlotte. Deeply troubled after seeing Eduard, the married man whom she is trying to renounce, Ottilie wants to get home as quickly as possible, so she decides to row across the dreamy lake instead of taking her usual path on solid ground. Distractedly she turns the boat over and accidentally drowns the baby. The scene is particularly horrifying since up till then nothing has happened in the novel except talk and the rearranging of people and landscapes. Goethe has already shown that Ottilie could have blossomed into a good mother or a good schoolteacher, but adulterous passion has denied Ottilie her proper use. The abused 'child' then causes the death of another child and later dies herself. In *Middlemarch,* a secular, probably intellectual vocation is the 'use' denied to Dorothea Casaubon, the modern Saint Theresa; this problem is the one we recognise. In the period of Goethe and Rousseau, however, 'use' means both a proper, natural fruition of being and a proto-Victorian busyness.

Until very recently — and perhaps still — the use of the woman's body determined feelings about love, and hence about adultery. For almost all of *Love and Marriage,* Lerner operates with a very general distinction between romantic love and married love, but in his last chapter he briefly mentions a vital third aspect of love, the natural use of the female body in fecundity or 'generation'. As Lerner remarks, in Fontane's *Effi Briest,* Baron Instettin wants to forgive Effi for the newly-discovered affair she had six years before, but a friend convinces him to cast her out because a forgiven adultress constitutes a dangerous precedent for society as a whole. This is how the problem is expressed in most Victorian literature; the adultress is wiped out; her child is told she is dead.

Yet surely the profound terror of the husband had mainly to do with himself, with his identity. The adulterous wife can bear him

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another man's child, a cuckoo in the nest who will erase the patriarch by taking over his name and his line. In matriarchy, biological fatherhood is of little consequence; in patriarchy the husband must entrust his continuation to the body of another person, the person who can have children. The reduction of fecundity from natural fruition to a male-controlled function is necessary if patriarchal inheritance is the basis of contract in society. This, and not some myth of differing sexual drives, has given us the double standard which in turn has given us so many bad times and good reads.

David Lodge

Pratt & Van

Setting the World on Fire by ANGUS WILSON *Secker* £6.50
Augus Wilson: Mimic & Moralist by PETER FAULKNER *Secker* £6.95

Three points emerge very strongly from Peter Faulkner's thoughtful and sympathetic, but far from sycophantic study, in which Angus Wilson's literary criticism and literary journalism are usefully considered alongside the stories and novels. First, and foremost, that Angus Wilson is a highly selfconscious, very *literary* novelist, widely and deeply read in the European novel of the last two centuries, and also a very ambitious one, prepared to take risks to earn his own place in that great tradition. There has been a persistent critical tendency (which Wilson himself admits he once encouraged) to place him as a representative figure of the antimodernist, neorealist fiction of the 1950s, though his books have frequently broken through the conventions of the well-made realistic novel. The second point is that he has always been obsessed with the theme of evil, and the problems it poses to the liberal humanist and the liberal humanist novel. The third point is that his art is highly theatrical, not only in the sense indicated by the word 'mimic' in Peter Faulkner's subtitle, but in the dominance of 'scene' over summary in his fiction, its insistent, Jamesian dramatisation of description and action.

All three points are very relevant to Sir Angus's new novel, for it is a highly original and ambitious work, much concerned with the manifestation of evil in the form of violence, and highly theatrical in both style and structure.

Its three Parts can, indeed, be described as three Acts. The first, dated 1948, introduces us to a great house, Tothill House, through the eyes and ears of two small boys: Piers Mosson, who may one day inherit it, and his younger brother, Tom. This house, which Angus Wilson has imagined with enormous verve and evident delight, is situated (in flat contravention of realistic decorum) just behind Westminster Abbey, and is a richly resonant architectural symbol. Originally built in the 17th century to the symmetrical and restrained design of Sir Roger Pratt, it was subsequently extended by the addition of a Great Hall in flamboyant baroque idiom by Sir John Vanbrugh, with a huge dome on the interior surface of which is depicted the myth of Phaethon, who borrowed the chariot of his father, the Sun god, but lost control of the horses and threatened to set the world on fire before he was dashed to destruction by Jove.

The two styles of architecture that are combined in Tothill represent alternative value systems — order v. energy, safety v. risk, the static v. the dynamic — and also correspond to the respective temperaments of the two boys, who indeed come to adopt the nicknames 'Pratt' and 'Van'. In the opening pages, Tom is terrified by the dome, feeling as if the sky is about to fall on him, while Piers exults vicariously in what he takes to be Phaethon's feat of flying (misinterpreting the myth because the inexpert painter put a smile on the face of the falling Phaethon). In the second, and longest part of the novel, Piers, now (in 1956) a precocious sixthformer at Westminster School, with a genius for theatrical production, seizes the chance to mount an amateur production of a newly discovered 17th-century opera called *Phaethon* by the French composer Lully, in the Great Hall at Tothill; and in his direction subtly undercuts the surface moralism of the story with a celebration of Phaethon as a revolutionary hero who risked all for glory.

Much of this novel, then, uses art, and the description of artistic practice, as an allegory of division in human values and human aims (and perhaps in the psyche of the author himself). But there is also a dynastic plot and, as one would expect, a good deal of excellent comedy of manners. The owner of Tothill House is Great Grandfather Mosson, a senile invalid. The house is actually run by his widowed daughter-in-law, Jackie (an American Christian Scientist whose mixture of transcendentalism and bitchiness is devastatingly rendered) and her son Hubert, a repressed bachelor, brother of the boys' father who was killed in the second world war. Their mother is looked down upon as vulgar by the Mossons.

'Scenes' are important to Angus Wilson not only in the technical, dramatic sense, but in the colloquial sense: those moments in family life when long-repressed grievances and animosities erupt, taboos are broken, and unforgivable things said. Marina Luzzi, the flamboyant, abrasive Italian fiancée of Hubert, delights in provoking such scenes, and their engagement founders when she reveals Hubert's penchant for flagellation. But the climactic scene of Part II comes when the boys' Ma tactlessly declares her intention to remarry. A tremendous family row ensues, as a result of which the boys are banished from Tothill and the production of *Phaethon* cancelled.

Act Three is dated 1969. Sir Piers Mosson, who has unexpectedly inherited Tothill House (after Hubert's sordid and scandalous death) and is already a famous director, has his dream come true: directing his long-postponed *Phaethon* in the Great Hall, this time with a professional cast. We infer that he has a broken marriage behind him, but otherwise his life seems happy and fulfilled. Tom, who has had a less ostentatious success in law, falls

in love with one of the opera singers. Ma is happily remarried and even Jackie has become a nicer person. The novel seems about to end in a glow of paradisal happiness. But passing allusions to civil unrest and terrorist bombs in the outside world strike an ominous note, and when Piers is coaxed into mounting another production at Tothill he finds that he has invited into it all the violence of the politicised modern world.

It is difficult to discuss this ending without giving away the narrative surprise that Sir Angus has prepared for his readers. Some will find it melodramatic and unconvincing — though the novel never does attempt a total plausibility. More important are the questions the ending raises about the novel's general import. It would appear that Piers has released energies he is unable to control, and Tom, the guardian of law and order, pays a fearful price in protecting him from the consequences. The novel ends, however, with Piers shrugging off this tragedy and re-consecrating himself to a life of artistic endeavour. What makes this difficult for us to accept is that art, in this novel, is so closely associated with hereditary wealth and privilege, because so closely associated with Tothill House.

By fancifully placing this near-feudal establishment in the heart of London, Angus Wilson seems to make it a symbol of, and comment upon, the English ruling class, decadent custodians of an authentic heritage; but the two brothers seem naively unaware that the social order to which they belong might constitute a provocation to anarchism. One can't help thinking that the author's delight in high art and high civilisation has led him to be over-indulgent towards these two characters, especially Piers, and somewhat perfunctory in the characterisation of their enemies. In this respect his 'dramatising' method is perhaps a liability, since almost everything comes to us through the consciousness of either Piers or Tom, and there is no authorial voice in the narrative discourse to resolve its ambiguities, or deflect the reader's doubts. But there is no doubt at all that this is a novel of high seriousness. The Arnoldian term of praise seems especially appropriate to a boldly conceived, imaginatively executed study of culture and anarchy.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Boom-tsie!

MICHAEL KUSTOW on a Viennese satirical masterpiece

The Jonathan Swift of turn-of-the-century Vienna, Karl Kraus, crowned his work with a magisterial 800-page drama, *The Last Days of Mankind,* which he published in his satirical periodical between 1915 and 1919. It's an immense edifice of found material about the first world war — news items, overheard conversations, letters, sermons, communiqués, children's songs. Kraus pursued the total meaning of that first global catastrophe in ever-widening circles until, as Brecht said, 'he put the age between quotation-marks'.

The Last Days has been written off as an unstageable 'reading-play' like Goethe's *Faust.* To stage it requires both virtuosity and a civilised gaze, because Kraus's vision is classical beneath its modernism. The current Vienna Festival production is by Hans Hollman — his third shot at it. He amassed a budget approaching a quarter of a million pounds, rehearsed for four months, then gave only 10 public performances of the seven-and-a-half hour show (though it has been taped for Austrian television). Viennese coffee-house guerrillas attacked the megalomania of the enterprise; yet Kraus needed a fair dose of that quality to write it at all, and the production has an imaginative sweep and moral challenge that are rare.

One of its most important characters is the building in which it takes place. Vienna's Konzerthaus, with its late-Hapsburg basreliefs and chandeliers, was completed in 1913; Kraus gave readings in it. Hollman swathed it in black crepe and burial symbols, ripped out the seats and filled the hall with coffee-house tables and chairs, traversed by a cruciform stage. His company of 20 actors, playing diplomats, soldiers, journalists, priests, stars, poets, barons, beggars and, above all, compulsive newspaper-readers, twine out of every aperture the building offers and bestride the crossroads stage in what begins as a triumphal parade and ends as a crawl.

Kraus had few illusions and rejected stage illusionism, so the production used extreme alienation devices: rapid costume changes in view, wigs which make no attempt to disguise themselves, and trans-sexual casting, topped by a longlegged leonine actress, Evelyne Hall, who portrays Kaiser Wilhelm as a sadistic principal boy in a pantomime gone mad. Hollman also frames Kraus's fragmentary scenes with sliced-up Strauss, Mahler, Wagner and Lehar, whose sensuous texture counterpoints the nerve-tight precision of the text.

Kraus's basic satirical method was to draw gigantic conclusions from a cliché in a news item, an inflated claim in an advertisement, a resonant sentimentality in an editorial: the stage proliferates with images of a lethal Press. A ticker-tape machine is paraded like a saint's effigy; a lifelong subscriber to the *Neue Freie Presse,* driven to insanity by its inconsistent editorials, dies beneath a mound of yesterday's editions; a chorus of newsvendors like Greek Maenads threads its way through the action, busy bellowing boys at first, finally cripples inaudibly sobbing headlines.

The Medea of journalism is Alice Schalek (Eva Kerbler) a gung-ho war correspondent whose glutinous prose Kraus, the master of the found object even before Duchamp, serves up as if his fingers would stink for ever from handling it. The actress endows her with schoolmarmish Thatcherite zest; a truly appalling comic creation in line with Kraus's prophetic awareness of the power of the media. Pope Benedict's lofty appeal for peace is juxtaposed with a cosily bloodthirsty editorial by Mauriz Benedikt, editor of the *Neue Freie Presse.* A flickering newsreel of frontline shelling and bombing is watched by an infantile prince in toytown regalia who greets each explosion with a babyish *boom-tsie!*

Two evenings containing over a hundred scenes can be experienced but not summarised, for there is no main story, only a relentless darkening. The performance's length is justified by the enormity of its subject: you pass beyond occasional boredom into a horrified fascination. The collage structure enables both text and performance to use a diversity of styles and languages just as an artist glues a photograph next to pen-marks or brush-strokes. Everything rests on the care with which a fragment is picked and placed, and the precision of the invented material to which it gives birth.

Thus, to select at random, there are cabaretistic scenes like the classroom with a pupil who needs to go to the lav and is told by his sanctimonious teacher that personal needs must be subordinated to collective ones; the Führer-like grocer extorting vast prices for his scarce sausages; the vain general posing over the battlefield map for the fashionable photographer; the sadistic railway-clerk with the 'Typical Austrian Face — extremely undernourished yet besotted with satanic relish', who refuses to sell tickets. There are scenes of flat camera-realism: extracts from blood-and-thunder church sermons; the self-congratulatory legalism of a black-gloved court-martial judge; and the soldier who shoots the waitress because she won't serve him. Each of these actually happened or was reported. As this crusade of Judeo-Christian Europe reaches its close, there are more and more scenes of quiet expressionistic power: an endless procession of limbless beggars and voiceless peddlars; drunks goaded into croaking song by news of another mammoth defeat; a Last Supper of military top brass whose laughter sounds like moribund wheezing, their faces as if emptied of blood.

All of the actors in this shape-shifting troupe are good, but Helmut Lohner as Kraus's mouthpiece, The Grumbler, is outstanding: a dead ringer for Kraus with his beaky nose and metal specs, animated by an Old Testament wrath that resonates through his brass voice. 'Hysteria protected by technology overpowers nature,' he cries. 'We were disabled by the rotary presses before the cannon claimed a single victim.' This is lapidary acting, a satirical performance of such intensity that it conveys a man both witnessing the end of his world and taking it as a personal affront.

The Viennese audience, forced by the traverse staging to literally confront themselves beyond the actors, seemed struck to the core, their frequent laughter even more frequently quenched by a wince of distress. Occasionally, in descents into melodrama and a demagogic interlude which had us standing like cattle in the foyer as actors ploughed through, Hollmann puts a foot wrong, but not for long. His *Last Days* is a theatre event in which a people confronts its own nature at a historic turning-point, something to which drama often aspires but rarely attains. Perhaps only the extremities of German-speaking history and the generous resources of German-speaking theatre could have provoked a text and a performance capable of conveying what Kraus described as 'a laboratory for world destruction'.

Jazz

Charles Fox

Outdoor Rites

Going to hear jazz was once a slightly furtive business, nearly always attempted after dusk, often involving a descent to underground regions. And after the second world war there was the all-nighter, frequently crowned by the *Sunday People* offering, with a pious shudder, a front-page photo of survivors sleeping it off. Yet jazz started as an outdoor music, used in New Orleans for parades and picnics quite as much as an accompaniment to dancing and drinking.

Something of those healthy origins surfaces whenever a jazz festival takes place. Two were planned for the past fortnight. The weekend before last certainly saw punters swarming across the lawns at Bracknell's South Hill Park, but what should have been three days of gambolling on the slopes of Alexandra Palace were frustrated by one of London's more spectacular fires. True, that still left Monday's all-star concert at the Royal Festival Hall. But gone was the chance of comparing two sizeable outdoor events: not just the music but the clientele, the ambience, even the differing methods of subsidy — at the Ally Pally by Capital Radio, at Bracknell by the Arts Council, the Southern Arts Association and the local town council.

If the Capital Jazz Festival, smaller than last year's yet still a hefty venture, promised to put the emphasis on American celebrities, Bracknell went on worthily cultivating the British product, yet without getting po-faced about it (after all, Rocket 88 and Georgie Fame's Blue Flames were there on the opening night). The avuncular Eddie Harvey (how many remember him as one of George Webb's original Dixielanders?) presided over a Musicians' Union Workshop, helping young tyros to find their feet. As usual there was a commissioned work. Well, two to be precise: Tony Coe's featured Kenny Wheeler's flugelhorn

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Kenny Wheeler's did the same for Coe's clarinet.

The small-scale, the semi-pro and the esoteric flourished in the galleries and cellars of the house (revamped Georgian with Bisto-brown panelling). But it was in the marquee, often with rain pattering on the canvas, that the main action took place. Stan Tracey and Keith Tippett improvised piano duets; the London Jazz Composers Orchestra celebrated ten years of staying avant-garde. But visiting Americans provided the really stirring moments: the guitarist Kenny Burrell silencing a damp and restive audience with dead-slow yet exquisite variations on 'My Ship'; Sheila Jordan ululating like a saeta singer in Seville on Holy Day, her performance of 'I See Your Face Before Me' demonstrating that the right kind of eclecticism can work. The George Coleman Octet ushered midnight in (the cooling air may have been the reason why the trumpeter sounded flat), Coleman's tenor saxophone splendidly mercurial, Billy Higgins drumming like a reincarnated Baby Dodds. And it was another drummer, Max Roach, who came up with the weekend's most remarkable playing, especially a solo executed on just his hi-hat cymbal and dedicated to another master drummer, Jo Jones.

If drummers tended to catch the ear at Bracknell, the Festival Hall was stacked with good brass men. Kai Winding, looking as scholarly as Miff Mole used to, played trombone with an adventurous kind of correctness (nowadays, instead of having J. J. Johnson at his side, he is partnered by the slightly bombastic Curtis Fuller). Clark Terry juggled with his mute; Randy Brecker unleashed a steely virtuosity; Freddie Hubbard started off playing clean-cut bebop, followed up with an emotive ballad, then spoilt things by opting for a flashy climax. Dizzy Gillespie, for once, sounded unwontedly restrained, at his best in a nicely thoughtful performance of 'Round Midnight'.

British representation was restricted to the rhythm section of John Critchinson (piano), Ron Matthewson (bass) and Martin Drew (drums), replaced for most of the second half by an illustrious but ill-assorted trio of Americans: Roy Haynes, drumming too loudly and too busily; Slam Stewart, whose routine of humming in unison while bowing his bass maddened after the third time round; and, playing piano with scrupulous economy, John Lewis, who swings as consistently and undemonstratively as Count Basie.

The concert was designed as a tribute to Charlie Parker (he died 25 years ago last March), which meant plenty of Parker tunes and lots of blues (Lewis was at his finest in these, invariably lean and inventive). Also on hand were two musicians who shared the distinction of not imitating Parker at a time when almost every other alto saxophonist was doing exactly that. Lee Konitz started off the concert, playing unaccompanied, moving into an ebullient 'Star Eyes'. But the hero of the evening was Art Pepper, praised in these columns just over a year ago for his appearance at the Hammersmith Festival. An outstanding performer in the 1950s, Pepper has now emerged as one of the major soloists of the 1980s. If a festival can be justified by a single solo, then, just as Max Roach reigned supreme at Bracknell, so, at the Festival Hall, did Pepper with his refashioning of 'Over The Rainbow' — lyrical, passionate, never for a moment sentimental, just quietly overwhelming.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Burned Brain

A Lesson from Aloes by ATHOL FUGARD *Cottesloe*
One Fine Day by NICHOLAS WRIGHT *Riverside*
The Strongest Man in the World by BARRY COLLINS *Roundhouse*

The 'lesson' from the aloes, or cacti, that litter the front porch of Xanadu, home of Piet and Gladys Bezuidenhout, is presumably that those who evolve spikes, large stalks and tough, fleshy leaves may be able to survive even a man-made drought, like the one now blighting South Africa. There are, it appears, many varieties of such plants, just as there are many varieties of victim in and around Johannesburg, whose Market Theatre is the company presently at the Cottesloe. Athol Fugard's most powerful work, from *The Blood Knot* to *Boesman and Lena* to *The Island,* involves the multifarious sufferings of the nation's blacks; but, from *Hello and Goodbye* to *Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act*, he has made it clear that South Africa isn't exactly Xanadu for many of its whites, either. *Lesson from Aloes,* whose three characters are an Afrikaaner farmer-turned-bus-driver, his Anglo wife, and a black friend, is perhaps his most successful attempt so far to show how sweeping and subtle is the human damage wreaked by the jackboot state.

The key information is slyly withheld, then slowly fed us, upping both the tension and our curiosity; and those who plan to see the play may prefer to cover their eyes and ears for the next few sentences. Piet joined a cell of radical blacks after a bus boycott, but is now suspected of having informed on Steve, who has just served six months for breaking his banning order. Is he really a Special Branch mole? To a bigoted eye, which is what some of Steve's followers have not-unnaturally developed, it would seem only too likely. As personated by Marius Weyers, he's large, craggy, and painfully blond, the kind of figure one might mentally fit out with a riot baton and imagine hammering heads in Cape Town or Little Rock. Moreover, he disappeared for no clear reason after Steve's arrest. The truth is, however, to be found in the sensitivity both of his soul and of his wife. She had a nervous breakdown after the police seized her private diaries — 'they violated me, Piet' — and he had to take her up-country to a mental hospital. Of course he isn't the traitor.

If anyone is, it's Steve, who has doubted Piet. 'If you could have believed it,' declares the Afrikaaner, glumly surveying the ashes of their friendship, 'there was no point in denying it.' Indeed, all three characters have suffered lasting hurt. Steve, played by Bill Curry with a sort of hollow jauntiness, has been broken by the days he spent beside a big, open window in the police station, and is off with his family to Britain. Gladys's mind is still crawling with sticky-fingered cops — a condition brought brilliantly, horribly to life by Shelagh Holliday — and her future looks as bleak as her recent past. As she says, in a line that perhaps only Fugard has the political credentials to get away with, 'they burned my brain as brown as yours, Stephen'. And Piet is left in social and emotional isolation: a cactus whose soft centre has been badly bruised, but which may yet prove hardy enough to adapt to the deepening drought outside. Fugard has hitherto seen hope for his country mainly in the resilience and resourcefulness of its blacks. This time, it's the unpretentious and unaffected decency of a white he ends by starkly celebrating; and where there's one, there must be others.

The week's other offerings take up the standard riposte of defenders of apartheid: 'How much freedom is there in black Africa, then?' and 'Would you prefer to live in Soviet Russia?'; and they concede that, yes, the alternatives have their failings, too. Nicholas Wright's latest is set in what may and may not be Tanzania, and more specifically in a college of education that appears to be as despotically and corruptly run as anything under colonialism. Who gains from the coffee that the students give their spare time to growing? A well-meaning but naive teacher from a London poly persuades them to ask the college principal, with doubly disillusioning results. A multinational with headquarters in Britain gets the profits; and the student leader, one Starford, will be sent back to the bush for bothering his betters with awkward queries. The play, if a little lax and loose at times, is consistently informative, entertaining, and open-minded, and ends with a question that suggests its problems aren't confined to a distant country of which we know little. Can the young Englishman find Starford a job in Britain? What are *we* going to do with the unfinished business of colonialism?

After this, Barry Collins's latest seems surprisingly crude. Up to the point his Soviet miner wins the world weightlifting crown with the help of steroids, it is vigorous and pacey enough; but subsequently he's as much the victim of a crusading dramatist as of the outrageously callous bureaucrats who pack him off, crippled but defiant, to a psychiatric hell-camp. The Russians would handle a rebellious hero more subtly than this, and it can be no service to the cause of the dissidents to pretend otherwise. A Soviet apologist who saw the play would be able to dismiss it as Thatcherite propaganda; and that, if you think about it, would make good propaganda for him, too.

Among this week's contributors:

GEOFFREY HOSKING is Professor of History at Essex University. His books include *The Russian Constitutional Experiment: Government and Duma, 1907-14.*

ROBIN BLACKBURN is an editor of the *New Left Review.* He also edited *Revolution and Class Struggle: A Reader in Marxist Politics* (Fontana).

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JON SILKIN's latest collection of poetry, *The Psalms with their Spoils,* was published recently by Routledge.

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Opera

Peter Conrad

Martyrs to Clothes

Der Rosenkavalier *Glyndebourne*
Costumes & Sets for Der Rosenkavalier by ERTÉ *Dover/Constable* £4.40

Erté at Glyndebourne hasn't so much designed *Der Rosenkavalier* as converted it, with fanatical finickiness, to his own epicene idiom. The wonder of the production is less the justice of the adaptation than its completeness: *Rosenkavalier* temporarily seems to be an opera about Erté's obsessively chic imaginative domain, its characters not Straussian voluptuaries but the debilitated prisoners of a suffocating style, corseted in fur and roped with pearls, inmates of that zoo-like, prohibitive enclosure which (as Barthes remarked of Erté) is the world of high fashion. These people are martyrs to their clothes, who volunteer to suffer for the sake of beauty. In the Glyndebourne *Rosenkavalier* they exist indeed chiefly as animated dummies for the perambulation of the prize garments: the operatic stage narrows to a catwalk in a couturier's salon.

Erté is a fetishist who delights in wracking and emaciating nature into art. He proudly contends that fashion is a deformation of the bodies it clothes: at the designer's imperious behest, women annually change their colour, their identity, even their physical shape. Erté's race of captive clients are the crouched, stooped, splayed and distended creatures who comprise the tortured uncials in that celebrated alphabet which he began in 1927. His people in *Rosenkavalier* are what they wear. Oktavian is a chocolate soldier wrapped in silver paper, Sophie a marzipan figurine packaged in white roses. Faninal, swathed in lamé or stifled in ermine, wears his wealth, his knuckles carbuncled with sparklers. In an opera relying on travesty this isn't inappropriate: clothing for Erté is a symptom of sexual neurosis, since it both pudically masks the body and teasingly accentuates it, and his sartorial fancies coincide with Strauss's vocal perversity, which makes the titular character a soprano playing a man who impersonates a woman.

Monopolistic colour schemes, as compulsory as a livery, demarcate the social and sexual antagonisms in the opera. Character is defined by décor. The Marschallin's apartments are chilly ornamental bowers of pink and blue, Ochs and Faninal are garish compounds of vulgar red and funereal black. These colours are heraldic values for Erté. Red denotes male sexual aggression: Ochs (presented here as a gross forerunner of the bearish backwoodsman Mandryka in *Arabella)* is garbed in a hunter's riding coat. Black, which Erté detests (he has for years campaigned against the régime of penguin attire which Glyndebourne recommends to its customers), is the uniform of male bureaucratic formality, worn by functionaries like the doctor and the attorney. The illicit male presence in the Marschallin's bedroom is betrayed by smudges of black which disgrace the pink and white décor: they belong to Oktavian's boots, his belt and the trimmings of his coat. This system of chromatic apartheid governs the action. The Marschallin sleeps surrounded by pink, but for her levée the walls obligingly swivel on their hinges and all objects alter to blue. Her cossetted and precious world is made of halftones. Faninal's palace in contrast is a place of opulent blatancy. Against both her Wedgwood neoclassicism and his exotic, expensive baroque are set the room Ochs hires for the deflowering of Mariandel: a hunter's lair haunted by folk devils, with antlered candelabra, chairs upholstered with animal hides, and stags rearing on the panelling — an outpost perhaps of the raw nature which Erté's dandified Vienna has disowned and belied.

Coiffure has always been a kinky preoccupation of Erté's. His hair-does, according to Barthes, are ascensional, wreathing and plaiting one of the body's grosser extrusions to make it an adjunct of dress. The costume he designed for Lucrezia Bori's Mélisande at the Met in 1927 robes her in hair: its lank ripples are indistinguishable from the gown she's wearing. His Oktavian at Glyndebourne, Felicity Lott, is blonde — but Erté censors her hair (which is merely natural) and clamps her in a page-boy's blonde wig. His Marschallin spends much of the first act dealing with her refractory locks, pinning them up as soon as she emerges from her adulterous bed, rebuking the hairdresser for his unbecoming arrangement of them. Hair in Erté's world is a hat-substitute, both a badge of rank and a mark of nature's immunisation as art. Thus the Marschallin's major-domo sports a crest of curls, and Ochs at the inn is unmanned and socially dishonoured when he mislays his wig. Furniture too sports elaborate hair-pieces. The Marschallin's bed is plumed and tufted, her cushions and drapes are tasselled, her mirror canopied like a tabernacle.

These ornate impositions are the point of the scenery: *Rosenkavalier* is to Erté a work about the sacrificial fetishism of which women are (in his view) the compliant victims. The dressing table is the altar at which the Marschallin, armed with a jewel-crusted, heart-shaped mirror, worships her own image, and at which she's immolated, crimped and coiffed for the delectation of cruel and greedy men. In the designs published by Dover, Erté's Marschallin looks like a malign schemer, a fatal woman resembling Mata Hari (one of Erté's early clients), wielding a dangerous powder puff, her decoy handkerchief at the ready.

On stage Rachel Yakar humanises the conception, but in this décor the Marschallin's monologue seems a spasm of aggrieved vanity, a lament for the loss of beauty rather than for the waste of time, and in her intervention at the inn she displays not so much sad, forgiving grace as the cool indifference of the narcissistic fashion model, impregnable inside her costume. In this scene it's the amplitude of her pink crinoline which lends her authority, not her demeanour: the costume does the work of intimidating Ochs for her.

Diminished to mannequins, the characters have little chance of establishing their psychological reality. The Marschallin after all is more than a patient repository of the arts of millinery and manicure. Oktavian too is more than an opportunistic androgyne. Even Sophie is a complicated creature, not a soubrettish bauble but a girl with the determination and the ruthlessness of innocence. If Erté's women are fashion-plates, silhouettes of immaculate style, then their enemy the carnal Ochs is a caricature, whose red coat and greasy black hair symbolise the predatory, hated male. All John Cox's production can do is illustrate Erté's fastidiousness about detail — Mohammed thoughtfully provides a second cup for the Marschallin's breakfast, and she astutely smuggles it into hiding when interrupted; Ochs (who will later need Annina to read him Mariandel's letter) puts on his specs to squint at the rose-bearer's miniature; the Marschallin's coiffeur sneaks a note into Valzacchi's paw. Luckily Bernard Haitink in the pit ignores the effeminacy of the décor and is true to the violent ardour of the score and to the eruptive, *Elektra*-like dissonances which darken and aggrandise the comic imbroglio.

Jon Silkin

Three Poems about Fear and Growth

A Socket of Plain Water

A socket of plain water. On my hand
the lake's obsidian congeals. I drew
a fish
a bearded wrinkle of fear. 'Immerse me.

Mercy is in the blood as much as blood
lingers in water. Torn from water,
mercy lies in your hand:
replace me in my sweet obsidian.'

Innocence Barbs the Lake

Hot hands: their fetid mercy sweats bread.
The palm hungers with its bribe,
The bread is a hook, and the baked meats
of slender grain allure our mouths;
this is the travesty of love
sodden with our elements.

He stares at my face, mingled in his:
water, the eyes' strange pastoral.

Our bodies throng, touchy and
phosphorescent,
like dew,
at the flower's lip.
Innocence barbs the lake.

The Sun's Body Rests

As in the shallows where the light frisks
are splintered flints in water's radials;
a grin comes,
a flickering of mirth's darkness. The flower
says
it will live.

Bread is a burden on water. Here we thread
ourselves to watching, a delicacy of fear.
Here
a flower is opening its waving spikes.

As if it were soul's glimmering aperture
the sun's huge body rests. Sacred with fear
we share each other's hinged timidities.
The flower is strong, the flower says it will
live.

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Television

Julian Barnes

Dark Clouds

On the evening the Rhodesian election results were announced, listeners to South African radio were promised they would hear the news live from Salisbury. At five minutes to the appointed hour the preceding programme ended. The SABC announcer proposed a brief musical interlude. With an irony that seems almost perky in the circumstances, he then put on Noel Coward singing 'There Are Bad Times Just Around the Corner'.

And there were dark clouds hurtling through the sky at the start of David Dimbleby's return trip to *The White Tribe of Africa* on *Panorama* (BBC-1): the dark clouds rising from the sabotaged Sasol oil plant. In the two years since Dimbleby's excellent original series, there has been a mild increase down there in both violence and liberal reform. Post offices have been desegregated, so that blacks and whites now queue more efficiently together. And some better-off blacks in Soweto can now buy 99-year leases on their houses — one of those 'liberal' measures which largely serve to emphasise the servitude of the black: how would you like a leasehold tenure of your bit of open prison?

Dimbleby's film felt a little disappointing, though on reflection it was hard to see how he could have done better. He even filmed a small riot in Soweto, with one of those distant, horrifying sequences of black soldiers batoning a black protester in sudden, vicious spasms (the aim usually being at the head); so perhaps the sense of disappointment was merely transferred from one's response to the continued intractability of the situation. This time round two things stuck in the mind. The first was the curiously non-specific language which all parties indulge in: reality is picked up with tongs. The niceish white farmer talked nursery morality, explaining politics with tags like 'Everyone who goes too fast trips and has a fall'; the politician (Piet Koornhof) talked bureaucrat's generalese, and even began one answer 'There are good logical reasons why . . .' which is the official's way of saying 'I know I haven't a leg to stand on, but . . .'; while the blacks talked picturesque Biblical-vague ('They' — the whites — 'are walking on coals now, they're not walking on gravel') and mocked the 'extra wrinkles' on P.W. Botha's face. Shortly afterwards P.W. Botha's face came on camera, and it looked pretty pink and unlined to me.

What also struck one was the dismaying way religion continues to bugger the country around. The National Party draws its ideology from a strict faith, yet one from which the gospel of charity seems to have been expunged: the farmer, asked about starvation in a neighbouring Zulu homeland, replied that doing anything about it was all the government's responsibility. And on the other side, the black schoolboy victims of police violence are buried to the consoling words of a white (well, whiteish) Christ. A coloured priest keened, 'If God is with us, who can be against us?' Well, for a start, the Dutch Reformed Church.

Across the South Atlantic, the language is more specific. 'We definitely shoot Communists,' declared a Guatemalan cotton millionaire (and Alan Whicker lookalike) in *Uncle Sam's Backyard* (BBC-1), the last of Bernard Falk's useful series on those small countries which keep setting fire to the Big Man's dustbins. In Guatemala, seamy state violence is endemic, with an estimated 1,000 political murders a year (not that the Left has a cleaner record: Falk's figure of 5,000 killings by the Communist government of 1951-54 works out at a bit more than the current regime's hit-rate). While waiting for a glum Marxist junta to arrive, a terrible Graham Greene tragi-comedy is being played out. Falk brought us an admirable lady from the Carter Human Rights department, imposing an arms embargo in the hope that lack of ammo encourages decent behaviour (remember what it did in Uganda); several examples of the plump, contemplative local establishment — 'Well, I *don't think* you should kill anybody because of their thinkings' (the man's obviously a raving pinko); and, scariest of all, the American public relations lady responsible for the Guatemalan account, who contended that 'Giving the army training will improve the human rights situation.' No doubt she's currently polishing the jingle to go with that line.

Meanwhile, back in the real world, the Queen Mother celebrated her eightieth birthday on two channels. Commentators strove to glamorise the triter aspects of the occasion, and deglamorise the privileged ones. Thus Judith Chalmers (ITV) told us of the QM that 'In 1953 she did a house-swap with her daughter' (as if the accession were part of a Sunday Times *Look*-page initiative); while Tom Fleming (BBC-1) portentously informed us that the dome of St Paul's is 'supported by brick and by stone'. Presently the Queen Mother (played by Charlie Drake) appeared, supported by thighs and ankles. Large amounts of taxpayers' sand was spread on the streets of London for the comfort of the horses. Two hours later, Fleming oozed his commentary to an end with 'Thank you for being you, your Majesty.' Or maybe he said, 'Thank you for being U.' It seemed to amount to the same thing.

Films

John Coleman

Anserine

Maîtresse *Screen on the Hill, members only*
The Secret Policeman's Ball (AA) *Prince Charles; Classic, Chelsea*
The Last Flight of Noah's Ark (U) *Classic, Haymarket*
Boris Barnet Season *NFT*

Barbet Schroeder — as producer of Rohmer's *Moral Tales*, films by Rivette and Jean Eustache — is a commendable fellow. As writer-director — *More* (1969), the pretentious *La Vallée* (1972), the unfortunate laugh-in *Général Idi Amin Dada* (1974) — he is a more questionable proposition, given to nudge-nudge tactics, at a loss to distinguish his *ars* from his elbow. Fascinated by the fringes of civilisation (hard drugs, hallucinogenic dream-lands, nightmare realities), obsessed by abnormal psychology, he returns oddly nerveless reports from the outer limits; his films don't add up. Whatever his avowed intentions — to hint, maybe, that we are all dogs beneath the skin? — the effects are opportunistic, sensation-mongering, silly. His uncertificated *Maîtresse* (1976), to which all this and more apply, may now be caught at the Screen on the Hill by those willing to wait 24 hours for special membership. It starts rather well with one Olivier (Gérard Depardieu), arrived in Paris from nowhere, helping to unplug the bath of expensive, waifish Ariane (Bulle Ogier), before reluctantly assisting a chum to burglarise the 'empty' flat below. Nestor Almendros's camera duskily patrols black leather gear, handcuffs, whips, a dentist's chair, a crouching male in a cage. Then, clank, the latest in retractable electric ladders descends from the ceiling, and down it high-heels a kinkily *maquillée* and garbed Ariane, the mistress. Before one can say 'sado-masochism' the tractable, macho oaf Olivier is lending his unzipped person at her behest: making water and money.

As M. Schroeder has correctly pointed out in interview, only about 15% of screen time is subsequently taken up by the SM, or 'downstairs', business of ritual humiliation, fladge, nipple piercing and the like. (After a nail was hammered through a client's scrotum, a friend whispered, merrily appalled: 'What if he was only asking for a screw?') Still, a sick/sad edge is present: the masked customers are mostly genuine cases and a real-life *maîtresse* clearly replaces Mlle Ogier for some of the heavier chores. One paying guest brought his own rack. The director comments:

> ... He was delighted to be able to use it in the film. He was so happy — but he wanted many more things to be done to him: gallons and gallons of water poured into his mouth, etc. I told him that I couldn't do everything.

Schroeder has a damn good try, though. 'Upstairs', Olivier is installed as Ariane's lover, consoling her when she abruptly ascends the ladder feeling nauseous, banking the rolls of notes, playing rape-games with her in the street. But a mysterious M. Gautier keeps ringing on the white phone (Ariane's private line) and dumb Olivier, never one to know on which side his bread is battered, tracks this suspected pimp down — against Ariane's wishes — and nearly ruins a perfect relationship. However, an equally mysterious happy ending is spliced on to this strange interlude. The documentary interest apart, one should perhaps underline for readers and would-be viewers unskilled in today's cinematic 'codings' that the whole affair is a crafty Gallic gloss on 'Goosey Goosey Gander', with Depardieu as part of the anserine service.

The Secret Policeman's Ball, Roger Graef's choppy film of the 1979 Amnesty International comedy nights, has at least one episode that might have come uncensored from Schroeder's 'downstairs' — when the scatty Ken Campbell Roadshow group engineers a strapped-down male body, legs apart, awaiting the arrival of a toy train leading with a kitchen fork. Elsewhere, the fun is fast and various. Peter Cook does his marvellous judicial summing up on the Thorpe case, damning the key-witness as 'a self-confessed

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player of the pink oboe', a line incidentally which originally fell from the teeming, coining brain of Billy Connolly, here at his peak with the tribulations of two Glaswegians in Rome, quaffing pints of crême de menthe, with the celebrated dawn outcome of diced carrots and tomato skins. Eleanor Bron eagerly spoons out a dismayed, growingly contorted confession to the God of Purley ('But, of course, Thou knowest that . . .'), Rowan Atkinson menacingly amuses passim, Cleese rants through 'Cheese' with Palin, and there is a bit too much of a terribly liberal, open, humane, etc. audience, crammed with people like one, for one to feel altogether happy all the time. This year, a sketch jabbing at the typical spectator might be in order?

The Last Flight of Noah's Ark is a Disney drag — children, animals, two Japanese soldiers, Elliott Gould as a snarly pilot, delicious Genevieve Bujold as a missionary, concertedly escaping from desert island on boat made from wrecked plane. Thumbing Bible, Bujold comes up with sparky tip: send bird with message. A sparrow could have carried the script. As for Boris Barnet (1902-1965), boxer, actor and handyman in Kuleshov's 'Eccentric' Workshop, his directorial output was erratic but he handled action, sound and locations with some sprightliness, enjoyed oddball characters, and generally gave his women more personality than was usual in Soviet cinema. My favourite in the season has a sexy Anna Sten coming to town in the silent *Girl with the Hatbox* (26 July), but also strongly recommended are *House on Trubnaya Square, By the Bluest of Seas* and *The Wrestler and the Clown.*

Weekend Competition

No 2626 **Set by Dan Kavanagh**

The recent reappearance of Martin Amis in these pages reminds me that his name is an anagram of A SMART MINI. Other such apposite reworkings of the names of regular or occasional contributors (or pairs of them) by 1 August. Maximum five entries each.

No 2623 **Set by Toby Jugge**

Contributions to an anthology of 'Poetry of the Third World War'.

Report **By Len the Unlucky**

Your entries were so numerous that they were shared out, evenly, among all the Complex staff. But then, as a result of reading them, everyone heaped all the poems back on my desk (*shelf* I should say perhaps, in the interests of accuracy) and disappeared to a meeting about nuclear disarmament. 'You don't mind staying to look after the Comp, do you, Len?' said That Woman. But it wasn't a question. I stayed and I got more and more depressed. By the time I'd finished I was expecting the wail of the sirens any minute. Unfortunately, strength of feeling and horribly vivid imagery are not enough to make an anthologisable poem. A powerful cumulative effect, then, but few outstanding poems. Eight quid each for the samples of bitterness printed below.

Stalking a frog upon the road
(At least I think it was. These days
A frog can look just like a toad.
Things have changed all sorts of ways),
I saw a Civil Servant rise:
One moment he was not, and then,
He was! A sight for smarting eyes —
One of those well-fed Council Men,
Gone to ground to govern us.
This creature had a radio thing —
I could not see so well, the pus
Was bad — but thought I heard a ping,
A voice repeating, 'Foxtrot tango . . .
Over to you. Are they all dead?
Reception's bad. Return to Quango'.
Frog gone, I ate the man instead.

T. GRIFFITHS

In World War Three the Tories see we don't go short of chow.
They feed us well, when spirits droop, on rich synthetic acorn soup,
Concocted by a clever group of chemists down in Slough.

There's fall-out free Frog Galatine (for all those who survive;
To keep it radiation-clean it's wrapped in polypropylene,
And served in every works canteen (where anyone's alive).

Our booze is of the highest class. That carboy clear and bright
Is Whitelaw Wine, served by the glass, distilled from pre-war Hyde Park grass.
By International Coal and Gas (The Chateau Wigan site).

And once a month there's Boeuf de Nautch — slab soya bean — devised
To withstand nucleonic scorch, you cook it with a welding torch,
And all enjoy this rare debauch (if still not atomised).

G. HAMILL

From my administrative bunker
I dream of bees and beds of flowers,
Bread and honey, green lawn teas,
And lovely, long-lost summer hours.

I envy you, you common man,
Beguiled by cardboard craft and lie,
You did not know your money went
To keep alive such worms as I.

I envy you; I heard your laugh,
Masking fear as roofs fell in.
You at least have lost your chains,
And there's no world left to win.

Gone my privilege exultant,
Now gone the future with the doubt,
I reap the harvest of deception
Till food and water both run out.

HENRY HETHERINGTON

What passing words for these stacked up as chattels?
— Only the silence of ten searing suns.
— Only the muttering wireless' chat of battles
Is stammering out some sum of megatons.
No saccharine speech — they have no hair, no balls,
Nor had they word of warning, just the fires,
The whirling, white-hot fire which melted walls;
Now shovels shift some bits for massive pyres.

What petrol may be found to burn them all?
Not from the North Sea fields shall come the gas
To brighten up the last appalling Mass.
The acid, crass old lies are now their gall;
Their only trace shall be some blackened rind;
Their last trump one charred fart from God's behind.

BILL GREENWELL

Thermonuclae

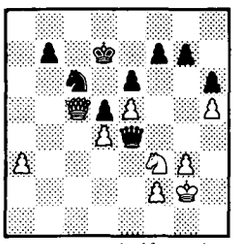
Survivor (if there is one)
Tell them, the Mandarins, this:
We obeyed, they lied —
Because we stayed at home
We died.

GEORGE CHARLTON

Tony Miles
Chess

No 189 **April Problems**

The April problems, like the columns, suffered badly from gremlins. In particular the black pieces in problem 176 almost vanished completely.

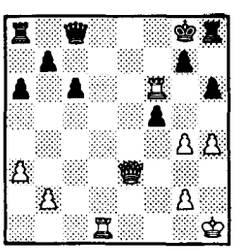


Problem 174 was basically a practical problem — see diagram. It came from the game Miles-Holmes from Reykjavik. I had been trying to make something out of nothing — sometimes almost less than nothing — against an opponent set on half a point. Against nondescript moves, say 1.Q-Q6ch Black plays 1. . . K-K1 and on 2.Q-B7, N-Q1 he has an impenetrable fortress and White has no chance at all. Also the pin on the N is a terrible nuisance. Either way the only good first move is 1.Q-B8! Now probably Black's best bet is 1. . . Q-B4 when, after 2.QxP, QxRP he should draw, but at least White has broken the pin and can still play. In the game he tried the obvious 1. . . NxQP running into the next switchback manoeuvre 2.Q-Q6ch! K-B1 (K-K1, Q-N8ch soon wins the N); 3.Q-B5ch! N-B3; 4.Q-B8ch winning a pawn. The game concluded . . . K-B2 (N-Q1; 5.QxNPxRP); 5.QxPch, K-N1; 6.QxNP (not QxKP? QxNch!), P-Q5 (if . . . N-Q5; 7.Q-B8ch); 7.QxRP, P-Q6; 8.Q-B4, Q-Q4; 9.P-R6, resigns. Black has a better try in 5. . . K-N3; 6.QxKP (6.Qx-NP, N-Q5 is less clear), K-R4 (stronger than . . . P-Q5) threatening QxNch. Now if 7.Q-N6, K-R5 but White has a good alternative in 7.Q-Q6 which defends everything (stops NxP, N-Q5, controls Q2), supports the KP's advance and places Black in mild zugzwang. If 7. . . K-R5 8.P-K6 is possible, but 8.Q-Q7! looks killing. If . . . KxP; 9.QxQNP and Black's king is too exposed, or . . . P-Q5; 9.QxQNP (or QxKNP) renewing the pin, whilst 8. . . QxNch!? 9.KxQ, NxP ch!? also fails. So 7. . . P-Q5 is the only other real move but now 8.Q-N6 is good (8.P-K6 is again possible), Q-Q4 (on the exchange of Qs White's kingside Ps decide and . . . QxNch leads to a lost P ending); 9.QxNP, P-Q6 and either 10.Q-B7ch-Q6 or simplest 10.P-K6(!) with Q-B3(ch) in reserve. To answer one other query 1.Q-B8, P-KN4; 2.QxPch, N-K2 is met by 3.K-N1 and if P-N5, 4.N-R4-N6 wins.

An interesting problem. Objectively it might have been better to set the position after 1.Q-B8, NxQP, but that would have been too easy! From the set position it required much more imagination to find winning chances for White. **Problem 175 (2k3rr/R1pplp2/5Q1p/1P1q4/5p2/8/1P4PP/5R1-K)** was simple:- 1.RxPch! (not 1.Q-R6ch? K-N1!) KxR; 2.R-B1ch, K-N2; 3.Q-R6ch, K-N1; 4.Q-R6ch, Q-N2; 5.Q-Q6ch, K-R1; 6.R-R1ch, Q-R2; 7.RxQch, KxR; 8.Q-B7ch, K-R1; 9.P-N6 and 10.Q-R7mate. So was **problem 177 (Q3bk2/p4q2/3p3p/2pN1p2/-5P2/2PP3K/2P1R2P/5r2):-** 1.N-B6! wins quickly. I will deal with problem 176 next week.

Problem 189

White to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked no later than 30 July.



Solution to problem 187

1.NxNP! QxN; 2.R-B8ch, R-Q1; 3.P-R5! winning material.

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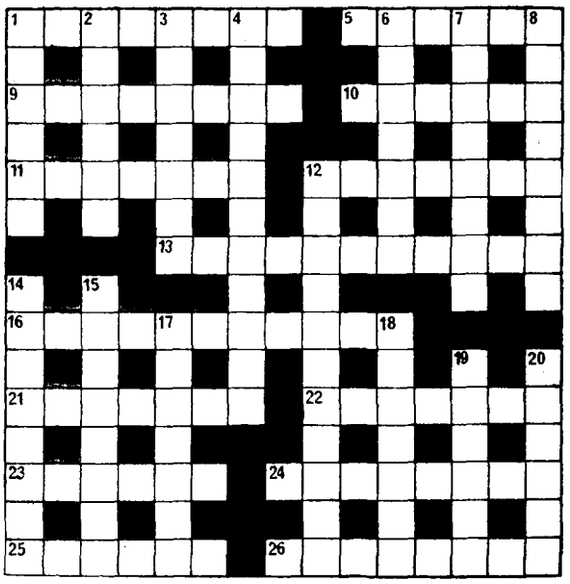
Weekend Crossword 1350

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1350, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 29 July.



Across

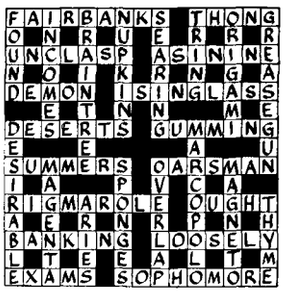
1 Award in college for flowers (8)
5 Proverb for one epoch before others (6)
9 Ridiculous performance of a score without something to wear (8)
10 Pupils who may be transferred to Milan United (6)
11 Crosser when over eighteen (7)
12 Words concerned with writing about the chest (7)
13 Red cards now shuffled by entertainer (11)
16 Almost masculine substance for dissatisfied ones (11)
21 If penniless the unlawful ruler would discover someone to lend him money (7)
22 Shakespearean character makes hot-headed speech (7)
23 Greeted with precipitation? (6)
24 One is in depression after order to be dutiful (8)
25 Abstract of gravity in changing tides (6)
26 Met Spurs — unusually for cricketers (8)

DOWN

1 If the young animal has its outfit removed it is bedtime (6)
2 Approached a man about an organ (6)
3 Makes but keeps a secret hidden (7)
4 Prayer of a bird held in its bill (11)
6 The problem of raising one's hat to a girl (7)
7 Plane climbs and there is sign of breaking up — what an ill-made thing! (8)
8 Perhaps I cross in a steamship but these are cutters (8)
12 Gear which is the custom in part of the country (11)
14 Trapped like a woman in the morning promise of a flower (8)
15 Showing contempt when dismissed during the throw (8)
17 Birds thus return with lots of victims (7)
18 Low social status disposes of me for shillings and pence (7)
19 Ancient brain-child (6)
20 A garment exists for animals (6)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1348



Prizewinners to 1348

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W. G. East (Oxshott)
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Death

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Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE Royal Shakespeare Company 836 6404. Recorded booking info 836 5332. cc 379 6233 (10-6, Sats 10-4). Final Perfs (ends 26 July) Dickens' 'Nicholas Nickleby' 'Wonderful! The RSC has produced the most marvellous piece of theatre' D. Mail. RSC also at The Warehouse in Willy Russell's 'Educating Rita' (until 25 July) 'a delightful, funny and perceptive evening' E. News, and O'Neill's 'Anna Christie' (until 22 July) 'Susan Tracy . . . a spellbinding performance . . . a must' S. Times. RSC also at The Piccadilly Theatre (until 16 Aug.) in Hart & Kaufman's 'Once In A Lifetime' and Pam Gems' 'Piaf'.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. 'Buried Child' by Sam Shepard. Dir. Nancy Meckler. Des. Gemma Jackson with Julie Covington, Marty Cruickshank, Philip Davis, Neil Johnston, Stephen Rear, Roland Oliver, Tony Rorh. Eves 8 p.m. Sats 4.30 p.m. & 8 p.m.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. Olivier Theatre (open stage) — 'Othello', 'Sisterly Feelings', 'Amadeus': Lyttelton Theatre — 'Browning Version — Harlequinade', 'The Elephant Man': Cottesloe Theatre — 'A Lesson from Aloes'. See daily press for dates & times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

NEW END. 794 0238. 'Letters Home' by Rose L. Goldemberg, based on Sylvia Plath's 'Letters Home'. Tues-Suns 8 p.m.

Cinema

SCREEN ON THE HILL. 435 3366 (opp. Belsize Park Tube). Derek Jarman's 'The Tempest' (AA) 2.55, 5.05, 7.15, 9.25.

Exhibition

JIMMY BOYLE: Sculpture includes latest works. Pentonville Gallery, 46 Amwell St, EC1. 01-837 9826. 11-6 Mon.-Fri., 11-2 Sats.

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Meetings

COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN (Marxist-Leninist) Fri 18 July 7.30 p.m. Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., WC1 'The British Revolution'.

GREATER MANCHESTER Labour Co-ordinating Committee: inaugural Conference 'Democracy and Accountability' with Brian Sedgemore, Michael Meacher, Audrey Wise; Saturday 19 July 1.45 p.m. at Manchester Polytechnic, All Saints Building, Oxford Rd, Manchester.

ICA EVENTS. The Mall, SW1 19 & 20 July 5.00 In the Cinema — 'Tibet: A Buddhist Trilogy' — three films on Tibetan Buddhist culture and politics. Part 1 on 19 and Part 2 on 20. Single tickets £2.00, Double ticket £3.50. 01-930 3647.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT under the Tories. Day Conference Saturday 19 July. Chair, Andy Hawkins. Speakers: Stewart Lansly, David Lipsey, Roy Shaw, Geoffrey Drain, Roy Hattersley. Africa Centre, 36 King Street, WC2. 10am-4pm. Tickets £2.50 (£1.50 members) Fabian Society, 11 Dartmouth Street, SW1. 01-222 8877.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE: Sunday lectures on religion and philosophy. Enquiries: 06285 26464.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for pamphlets, book list, programme. Wed 23 July 8pm. Informal Q/A Meeting: 'Reincarnation and Karma'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

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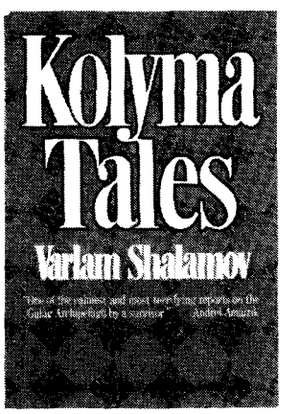

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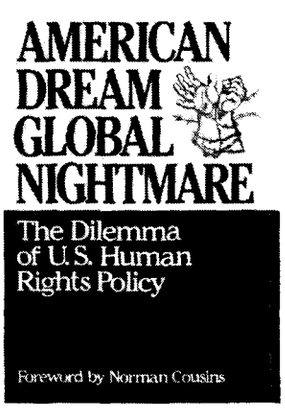

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